

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

By WILLIAM DODD, *M.A.*
Prebendary of Brecon, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

IT IS APPOINTED UNTO MEN ONCE TO
DIE, BUT AFTER THIS THE JUDGMENT.

Heb. ix. 27.

The SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. NEWBERRY, at the *Bible*
and *Sun* in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*.

M.DCC.LXV.

REFLECTIONS

ON

D E A T H.



By WILLIAM DODD, M.A.
Prebendary of Brecon, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

IT IS APPOINTED UNTO MEN ONCE TO
DIE, BUT AFTER THIS THE JUDGMENT.
HEB. IX. 27.

THE SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. NEWBERRY, at the Bible
and Sea in St. Paul's Church-yard.
M.DCC.LXX.

TO the RIGHT HONOURABLE

The EARL of BUTE,
First Lord of his MAJESTY's Treasury,
Knight of the Most Noble Order
of the GARTER, &c. &c. &c.

MY LORD,

WHATEVER may be the Execution of the little Performance, which I have the Honour to present to your Lordship, it will derive some Merit, I am persuaded, in your Lordship's Sight, from the good Meaning wherewith it was written, from its Suitableness to my Profession, and from the importance of its Subject. Perhaps, too, its Author's undissembled Respect for your Lordship may give it some additional Value; for true Respect, we are assured, can give Value to the smallest Offerings from the Hands of the poorest.

But indeed I did not know to whom I could, with greater Propriety, inscribe a Work of this Nature, than to a Nobleman, whose regular Life, and punctual Discharge of all the social Duties, must render *Reflections on Death* not unpleasing: Whose Regard to Works of Literature hath always been eminent and consistent: And who, though continually employed in Affairs of the highest Moment, hath testified that Regard by the most favourable Attention to Men of Science and Learning.

From hence, my Lord, we are encouraged to promise the fairest Days to good Letters and good Manners: — They cannot but flourish under your discerning Eye, and the fostering Patronage of our beloved MONARCH; in whose unsullied Virtues, while his People felicitate themselves, no grateful Man can be insensible

DEDICATION iii

sensible of the Honour, which redounds to the illustrious Person, who had so considerable a Share in forming the Royal Mind to Virtue; and inspiring it with those great, just, and Patriot Sentiments, which have obtained to our Sovereign, from his Subjects, that most honourable of all Appellations,—the Good!

Happy in your PRINCE'S Favour, my Lord, and happy in the Consciousness of your own Integrity, you will go on to deserve and to obtain the Esteem and Affection of all Men of Science, of Virtue, and Religion. So will your Name be placed high in that Temple of true Glory, where the Whispers of Malevolence, and the Clamours of Faction shall never be heard; where Envy, the unfailing Shadow of Merit, shall never be permitted to enter; and where——when that melancholy Hour is come, which no Might nor Greatness in Mortality

IV DEDICATION.

Mortality can delay,—that Hour in which you, my Lord, shall be lost to your Friends, to your Country, to your King, your Monument shall proclaim the glorious Truth, that “You were a principal Instrument in putting an End to a War, uncommonly wide and extensive; and of restoring peace to an exhausted and depopulated World.”

I am, my Lord, with the most respectful Acknowledgments for this Indulgence,

Your LORDSHIP'S

Most obliged and devoted

Humble Servant,

West-Edm,

Jan. 1, 1763.

WILLIAM DODD.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THES E Reflections were first written with a Design to be published in a small Volume proper to be given away by well-disposed Persons at Funerals, or on any other solemn Ocasion. But the Editors of the Christian's Magazine, supposing they might be of some Service to that useful and well-esteemed Work, requested the Author first to print them there, and afterwards to pursue his original Design. Accordingly, they were printed in separate Chapters, and he has reason to be satisfied with the Reception they met with. His best Prayers accompany them in their present Form, that they may be found useful to Mankind.

He is bound in justice to the ingenuous Writer of Mr. Nash's Life, to declare, that the Passage objected to, p. 136, is corrected in the second Edition of that Work.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THESE Reflections were first written with a Design to be published in a small Volume proper to be given away by itself—disposed Persons at Funerals, or on any other solemn Occasion. But the Editors of the Christian's Magazine, supposing they might be of some Service to that useful and well-estimated Work, requested the Author to print them there, and afterwards to

ERRATA.

P. 6. line 11. for, *read*, P. 26, l. 13, for *while as he goes on, they are, how can we expect it?—r. how can we expect it?—while, as he goes on, they are—P. 111, l. 11. for wrought, wrote.* His best Favourers accompany them in their present Form, that they may be found useful to mankind.

He is bound in justice to the ingenious Writer of Mr. Wallis's Life, to declare, that the Passage objected to, P. 130, is corrected in the second Edition of that Work.

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

C H A P. I.

*To die—to sleep—
No more: and by a sleep, to say, we end
The heart-ach, and the thousand natural shocks,
That flesh is heir to:—'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd—to die—to sleep—
To sleep!—perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub,
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause:—there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life:
For who wou'd bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely:
The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th' unworthy takes—
But that the dread of something after death
(That undiscovered country, from whose bourne
No traveller returns) puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear the ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of. SHAKESPEARE.*

A FEW evenings ago I was called to perform the last sad office to the sacred remains of a departed friend and neighbour.

It is too commonly found, that a familiarity with death, and a frequent recurrence of funerals, graves, and church-yards, serves to harden rather than humanize

B

2 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

manize the mind ; and to deaden rather than arouse those becoming reflections, which such objects seem excellently calculated to produce. Hence the physician enters, without the least emotion, the gloomy chambers of expiring life: the undertaker handles without concern the clay-cold limbs: and the sexton whistles unappalled, while his spade casts forth from the earth the mingled bones and dust of his fellow-creatures *. And, alas ! how often have I felt with indignant reluctance my wandering heart engaged in other speculations, when called to minister at the grave, and to consign to the tomb the ashes of my fellow-creatures.

Yet nothing teacheth like death : and though perhaps the business of life would grow torpid, and the strings of activity be loosed, were men continually hanging over the meditation—yet, assuredly, no man should fail to keep the great object in view ; and seasonably to reflect that the important moment is coming, when he too must mingle with his kindred clay ; when he too must ap-

* See *Shakespeare's* grave-diggers in *Hamlet*.

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 3

pear before God's awful Judgment-seat, when he too must be adjudged by a fixed, an irrevocable, an eternal decree.

As I entered the church-yard,

*Where heaves the turf in many a mouldring heap;
where,—Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,*

so many of my friends, my neighbours, my fellow-creatures, lie mouldring in dust;—struck with the slow and solemn sound of the deep-toned bell, and particularly impressed with the afflicting circumstances of his death, whose obsequies I was waiting to perform; I found the involuntary tear rush from mine eyes, and the unbidden sigh heave in my labouring bosom.

And, “Oh Death, mighty conqueror, I could not forbear saying, in the silence of unaffected meditation——
Oh Death, how terrible, how wonderful thou art! Here I stand, full of life; health smiling on my cheek, and sparkling in my eye; my active feet ready to bear me briskly along, and my hands prompt to execute their appointed office: scenes of pleasing felicity are before me; the comforts of domestic se-

renity dwell seemingly secure around me; and my busy soul is planning future improvements of happiness and peace. — But the moment is coming, perhaps is near, when life's feeble pulse shall play no longer, these eyes no more sparkle, nor this cheek glow with health, that, pale as the shroud which invests me, and those closed with the lids, to unclothe and awaken no more: the feet shall decline their function, and the useless hands fall heavily down by my side. Farewell then all the engaging, endearing scenes before me: farewell the comforts of domestic peace: my best loved friends shall weep tenderly over me; and my thinking, restless, busy soul, at length find repose, and be anxious no more.

— It is fixed: and all the powers of earth can neither arrest nor divert the sure unerring dart! but with consummate wisdom the great Lord of the World hath wrapped up the important moment in impenetrable darkness from human view: that from the cradle we might have the solemn object before us, and

and *act* as *men*, because as *men* we must die!

Let me then not labour to divert the improving speculation, but advance still nearer, and see, if I can learn, what it is to die!

To die! Oh you, my friends, amidst whose graves I now am wandering——you, who ere long, like me, trod this region of mortality, and drank the golden day——with you the bitterness of Death is past; you have tasted, what that is, which so much perplexes the human thought, of which we all know so little, and yet of which we all must know so much! Oh could you inform me what it is to die, could ye tell me what it is to breathe the last sad gasp,—what are the sensations of the last convulsion, of the last pang of dissolving nature! Oh could you tell me how the soul issues from the lifeless dwelling which it has so long inhabited; what unknown worlds are discovered to its view; how it is affected with the alarming prospect: how it is affected with the remembrance and regard of things left here below——Oh could ye

6 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

tell me—but, alas! how vain the wish!
—clouds and darkness rest upon it:
and nothing but experience must be al-
lowed to satisfy these anxious researches
of mortals.

Yet let us not forbear these researches:
or at least not relinquish the interesting
meditation. For what can be of equal
importance to man, destined inevitably
to tread the path of death,—what
of equal importance to examine, as,
whither that path leads, and how it may
be trod successfully?—what of equal im-
portance for a pilgrim of a day to con-
template, as that great event which must
open to him a state unalterable, and
without end?

*All men must tread that gloomy path
—It is appointed for all men once to die.
Adam's curse is upon all his posterity.
Dust they are, and to dust they must re-
turn—But whither leads that gloomy
path!—Alas in the heathen world with
a bewildered mind they sought the reso-
lution of that question.—Death was
dreadful indeed in such circumstances:
for if we want the glad hope of immor-
tality to cheer our departing souls, what
affliction*

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 7

affliction can even be conceived more afflicting than death and dissolution, separation from all we hold dear on earth, and perfect annihilation of all future expectancies?

Life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel: and the question is answered clearly from that book, whence alone we can gain information on this point—*Once to die, and after that be judged.*—*We must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ!* Oh my soul, how awful a reflection; can any thing more be wanting to inspire thee with the most serious purposes, and most devout resolves, than the certainty of *death*, the assurance of *judgment*, the knowledge of *immortality*!

And after death be judged! Tell me no more of the pangs of death, and the torment of corporeal sufferance.—What, what is this, and all the evils of life's contracted span to the things which follow after? This it is, which makes death truly formidable, which should awaken every solemn reflection, and stimulate every rational endeavour!

8 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

To be judged! to be sentenced by an irreversible decree, to an allotment eternal and unchangeable; an allotment of consummate felicity, or consummate distress.

Oh immortality, how much doth the thought of thee debase in their value every earthly enjoyment, every earthly pursuit and possession—and shew man to himself in a point of view which amply discovers his true business on earth, which amply discovers the true dignity of his nature, and forcibly reproves his wretched attachment to sublunary things.

And methinks, as if a voice were speaking from yonder grave—I hear a solemn whisper to my soul!

“Every grave proclaims thy own mortality! child of the dust, be humble, and grow wise! a few days since, like thee, I flourished in the fair field of the earthly world! a few days since I was cut down like a flower, and my body lies withering in this comfortless bed! regardless of God, and inattentive to duty, I passed gayly along, and thought no storm would ever overcloud my

my head!—In a moment the unexpected tempest arose. I sunk, and was lost. Go thy way, and forget not thyself: remember that to-day thou hast life in thy power; to-morrow, perhaps, thou mayest lie a breathless corpse! Estimate from thence the value, poor and small, of all things beneath the sun,—and forget not that death and eternity are, by an indissoluble band, united! If thou darest to die, and unprepared meet thy God, who can enough deplore thy misery, most wretched of beings! everlasting anguish, remorse, and punishment assuredly await thee.—But if bearing futurity in mind, thou art so blest, as to live in conformity to the law of thy nature, and the Gospel of thy God—the Saviour of mankind hath opened the golden doors of perennial bliss for thee, and eternal delight, from the full river of God's inexhausted love, remains to reward thy faithful services.

Immortal! be wise, remember judgment, and learn to die.—”

Lost in the deep reflection, I was awakened from it by the intelligence of

10 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

the approach of my departed friend's funeral.

C H A P. II.

*Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest
not what a day may bring forth, Pr. xxvii. 1.
Defer not until death to be justified! Eccles.
xviii. 22.*

O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that liveth at rest in his possessions; unto the man that has nothing to vex him; and that hath prosperity in all things: yea unto him that is yet able to receive meat, *Ecclus. xli. 1.*

THE horses, nodding their sable plumes, advanced with solemn pace; and the slow-moving wheels of the melancholy hearse seemed to keep time with the deep-toned bell; expressive of the silent sorrow, now and then interrupted with a groan of distress, which reigned in the mournful coaches that followed.

They stop:—and ah, my friend, what all this labour, and all this difficulty to drag thy body in its last narrow dwelling, from the confinement of the hearse,

hearse, and to bear it along the church-yard to its last narrow cell in the church! Ah where is thy former activity—thy wonted sprightliness and vigour! Thou who didst tread over the threshold with such lively strength, and brushed away the dew of the morning with stout and nimble vivacity;—have thy feet too forgotten to do their office?—And must thy fellow-mortals toil beneath the load of thy clayey corse, to bear thee from the sight and sense of the survivors?

Oh Death, thou sovereign cure of human pride! To what a state, impartial in thine attack, dost thou reduce as well the noblest and the fairest, the greatest and the best, as the meanest and most worthless of mankind! Though our friends be dear to us as a right eye; lovely as the bloom of the morning; powerful as the scepter'd monarch of the East; thou not only degradest them from the elevated height, but renderest obnoxious to the view; and inaccessible to the tender embrace of the last lingering, faithful, unshaken adherent! Let corruption cease to be vain;

12 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

let rottenness, and dust, no longer swell in brief and borrowed arrogance!

But see the afflicting sight! Five tender children, each in an almost infant state, are led by weeping friends, in mournful procession, after the body of their departed father.

In a coach behind, waiting to complete the melancholy view, is an infant, three days old, brought into the world by its half-distracted mother, before its appointed time! Big sorrow, and insupportable, hath hastened the throws and dire anguish of birth; and behold the little orphan, insensible of its misery, is offered to the regenerating font, while its father is consigned to the bowels of the earth!

Crowds of spectators from every part are attentive to the moving scene: on every face sits sympathetic sorrow; in every eye swells the generous tear of compassion and concern.

But a few days are past since a trembling messenger, with breathless speed, urged my instant attendance at the sick bed of NEGOTIO, on whose life, it was to be feared, the remorseless fever had made

made fatal inroad. — I hastened without delay; and I found — but who can describe the afflicting misery? Confusion, anguish, and distress; weeping, lamentation, and woe; dismay and unutterable agony took up their residence, in the dwellings of *NEGOTIO*! Surprized in the midst of youth, and in the ardor of earthly pursuits, by the awful and irresistible summons of death, the *husband*, the *father*, the *man*, lay wracked with such thoughts as his condition might well be supposed to awaken. Unable to bear the shock, his wife, who long sleepless had watched by his couch, was thrown on the ground in an adjacent chamber, and her little infants were weeping around her, the more to be pitied, as unconscious of their misery, and wondering with artless plaints, why their beloved *mamma* was thus sad and in tears! Near relations were tender in their best offices, while every heart was anticipating the wretched widow's distress.

When I sat down by his bed, and gently undrew the curtain, he looked — and shall I ever forget the earnest, anxious, speaking look? A tear dropt from

14 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

from his Eye, he caught my hand, he strove to speak, but his full heart forbade; and the organs of speech, deeply affected by his malady, were unfaithful to the trust of words which he gave them: we sat silent for some time, and with difficulty at length I perceived that he said, or wished to say, "*I fear it is too late. Pray for me: for Christ's sake pray.*" I endeavoured, as well as the affliction of my mind would permit me, to suggest every ground of hope, every motive of consolation: he squeezed my hand and sighed. "Little is to be done, he strove to say, amidst all the distractions of a sick bed like mine: oh consider my wife, consider my poor little babes." We said all which could be said; had scarce finished the usual prayers, and were preparing to mention the Sacrament, when the visit was interrupted by the necessary attendance of the physician, whose departure the lawyer awaited, to settle his temporal affairs. Two more blisters were ordered to fix he already had upon him; a drowsy sleepiness, dire prognostic of death seized him; which hourly increasing,

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH 15

ing, at length terminated in strong convulsions, and the busy, active, spritely NEGOTIO died in his thirty-third year!

Died! utterly unprepared and unprovided to leave this world, far less provided and prepared to enter into the next. His worldly concerns totally unfettled; his eternal concerns scarce ever thought of!

How much to be deplored is the fate of NEGOTIO! and yet, alas, how much is it to be feared, that many thousands are hourly splitting on the same rock with him.

He lived only for this world. Full of hope, and buoyant with life, death was not in all his thoughts; and a future state, when suggested to him, was considered as unworthy his present concern, because it was judged so distant. He thought not of the present span of existence, as of a short state of trial, an hour of weary pilgrimage; nor considered himself as an immortal being, speedily to give account to the dread judge of mankind. But, deluded by the specious pretence of making necessary provision for his family, a duty he well

16 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

well knew incumbent upon him, a duty he saw universally approved and applauded; he had no other view than to amass wealth, and provide a large fortune for his children; the comforts of which he promised himself to partake, and had formed many chimerical schemes of chariots and country retirements, of brilliant gayety and envied splendor.

Amidst these designs and pursuits, it might with too much truth be said of NEGOTIO, that God was not in all his thoughts. Indeed he regularly attended his church in the morning of the Sabbath, and as regularly gave the afternoon to indulgence and dissipation. But while at the church how listless was he to the prayers, now and then yawning out an unmeaning *Amen*; for his heart was there where his *treasure* was placed. The sermons had seldom much weight with him; he sometimes observed they were good; and when they touched on the subjects most pertaining to himself, he failed not to remark, that the preacher was rather *too severe*. Thus he went on; and in the eagerness of temporal pursuit, and the over-earnest desire

desire to grow rich, had too far engaged his fortune, and not been successful according to his hopes ; the reflection on which harrassed his mind ; while his industrious desires to obtain his ends and bless his family, as much harrassed his body, and brought on that fever, the sad issue of which we have seen.

Many and excellent were the qualities of *Negotio* ; his mind was tender and humane ; tender affection dwelt on his heart towards the partner of his bed ; and few parents knew a more sensible concern for the fruit of their loins. No man would have been more ready or more active in the kind offices of friendship, if the multiplicity of his own avocations had not rendered him incapable of being serviceable to others. He had no objection to the great truths of revelation, and once in a sickness, from whence he was wonderfully raised, determined strictly to comply with them ; but the world recovered its dominion as health again mantled in his cheek, and he returned to the pursuit which engaged his heart, with vigour redoubled, and activity augmented, in proportion
to

18 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

to the time and the opportunities he had lost. How often in the freedom of friendship have I remonstrated, but remonstrated in vain; till he saw me with shyness, and heard me with reluctance. Striving to justify himself, he usually concluded, when every argument failed, that he was yet *young*, and not likely soon to die; and would in retirement perform all those duties, and prepare for that futurity, which he could not but acknowledge it was wise to foresee, and necessary to prepare for.

Alas, my friend, how are thy vain hopes frustrated! Cut off in the full blossom of all thy expectations, in the flower of life, thy earthly designs all abortive; thy beloved wife and dear children left to struggle with loneliness, sorrow, and difficulties; and thy soul, thy immortal soul, gone to meet its God and its Saviour! The God who created, the Saviour who died to redeem it. The God, whom it never desired to serve or to love; the Saviour, whose mercies it never implored, except, perhaps, at the last sad moment; and whose wonderful loving-kindness had no charms

charms to engage it to obedience and duty.

And is the fate of *Negocio* peculiar? Is he the only dreamer amongst the many thousands who walk the walks of mortality? would to Heaven he were! or would to Heaven his hapless example might be hung out as a beacon to warn others, and prove effectual to awaken the children of this world from their sleep of death, thundering in their ears this solemn admonition.

“ What art thou doing, child of eternity, what art thou seeking with such restless assiduity! Look up, and behold the Heavens, where dwells the judge of the world! Formed by his hand, thou art placed awhile, short-lived probationer, on his earth, and when he shall give the tremendous summons, thou must drop thy earthly body, and appear, oh immortal soul, before his judgment-seat! Eternity then awaits thee; eternity, as thou hast done good or evil; eternity blessed or miserable! Wilt thou then, in the folly of thy heart, neglect thy God; set up thy standard on earth; and think to fix thy dwelling here, when per-

20 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

perhaps the breath of death may puff down all the phantastic castles raised by thy airy hopes ! Wilt thou forfeit eternal joys for the transitory things of earth ? Wilt thou not be a *man* ? act wisely ; choose soberly ; keep immortality in view, and live every day as one who knoweth that the next day, perchance, he may be obliged to lay aside his pilgrim's weeds ; leave the inn of this uncertain life ; and enter on a state which can never be changed, and which shall never have end ?”

Whatsoever effect these Reflections may have on others, may they, oh my God, at least, be imprinted on my own heart ! never may I so live *here*, as to forget that I am to live *hereafter*.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

I heard a voice from Heaven, saying unto me, Write, From henceforth blessed are the dead who die in the Lord---Even so, saith the Spirit: for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them, Rev. xiv. 13.

SUCH was *Negotio*; whose sad funeral obsequies performed, and whose little infant baptized, I was soon left alone to my solitary walk in the church-yard; and being not much disposed to leave the solemn scene, I determined to continue a while longer, and indulge the pleasing sobriety of melancholy meditation.

How various, how innumerable are the shafts of *Death*! They fly unerring from his quiver around us, and on so thin a thread hangs human life, to so many accidents and disasters is human life subject, that one would rather marvel that we continue to *live*, than that we should forget one moment that we are to die! Nothing can be more beautiful, nervous, and expressive, than the fol-

22 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

following fine Prayer used in our *Burial Service*.

“ Man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live, and is full of misery! He cometh up, and is cut down like a flower; he fleeth as it were a shadow; and never continueth in one stay.

In the midst of life we are in death: of whom may we seek for succour, but of thee, O Lord, who for our sins art justly displeased.

Yet, O Lord God most holy, O Lord most mighty, O holy and most merciful Saviour, deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death.

Tbou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts: shut not thy merciful ears to our prayers: but spare us, Lord most holy, O God most mighty, O holy and merciful Saviour, thou most worthy judge eternal, suffer us not at our last hour, for any pains of death, to fall from thee.”

Were we influenced at once by the doctrine and the piety of this incomparable prayer, there is no doubt but we should make a better estimate of Life and of Death than is usually done; should set a less value on the one, and
meet

meet the other with more courage and constancy.

For what is man, and what is his life—*Man that is born of a woman hath but a short time to live*,—short indeed, suppose it to extend to the utmost length of human existence, even to fourscore years. But, alas! too commonly, extent of life is but extent of sorrow; the time, though short, is yet *full of misery*. The natural and acquired evils, the evils unavoidable, and the evils brought on ourselves by our own folly, vice, and imprudence are many, are great. Our best happiness is short, precarious, and uncertain; *he cometh up, and is cut down like a flower*; to-day we flourish in all the external accommodations of life, to-morrow the taste can no more relish its delicacies, nor the ear be delighted with the melody of the viol; no more the tongue can chaunt with pleasing harmony; the eyes open no more on sublunary scenes, the useless lids for ever closed by the trembling hand of our weeping friends. As the shadow that departeth, that *fleeth away*, and its place is known no more, so we vanish from the earth,
and

24 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

and our memory is soon buried in total oblivion. To us little regard is paid any longer: still our associates, with their usual gayety and ardor, pursue their several designs; still, as before, the business of life goes briskly on; the sun shines as brightly; the earth blooms as gayly; the forests eccho as sweetly with the music of the winged choristers; and all things wear their accustomed form: while our neglected clay is mouldering in the dust, and trodden over by many a thoughtless,—perhaps many a friendly foot.

Many a *friendly foot*!—yes, even now, while I wander in the silence of the night, amidst these lonely receptacles of the dead, how many *graves* are around me, which contain the precious relics of neighbours and fellow-creatures, by myself consigned to their last earthly home!—wretched, wretched home, had man no hope in his death; were not the soul secure of immortality; were not the body lodged in the grave, as a faithful deposit, hereafter to be raised to life and glory, by the Almighty Redeemer's irresistible trump.

That

That reflection sooths all the sorrow,
and extracts all the poison from the dart
of death!—What is that I read on yon-
der tomb—on which the passing moon
reflects her full light, as she walks ma-
jestic in brightness through the skies,
and makes her silver way through the
dark and mantling clouds — *Ob Death,
where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy
victory? The sting of Death is sin, and
the strength of sin is the Law.—But,
thanks be to be God, who giveth us the vic-
tory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.—*
These were the words which last hung
on the lips, and at his desire are engra-
ven on the tomb of OSIANDER, who died
full of faith; a man whose death might
well inspire the wish——*Let me die the
death of the righteous, and let my latter
end be like his!*

O NEGOTIO! how unlike to thee was
OSIANDER! how unlike in life, how un-
like in death! — though the same tem-
poral concerns, the same worldly occu-
pations were common to either.

Happy in parents, who well knew the
influence and importance of religious
principles, OSIANDER was early initiat-

26 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

ed, and perfectly instructed, in the school of Piety : abundantly did he verify the truth of the wise man's observation : for conducted, when young, into the happy path of truth, he never departed from it. His youth was amiably distinguished by the most conscientious and tender regard to his parents ; presage of his future felicity ; and his whole demeanor was tempered with the most winning modesty, and engaging respect.

Rare felicity in OSIANDER, he obtained a partner, formed with every qualification suitable to his own : it might well be said of them, so similar were their tempers, their desires, their pursuits, so much

*Like objects pleas'd them, and like objects pain'd,
that*

'Twas but one soul that in two bodies reign'd.
No wonder then OSIANDER was a pattern, as of filial, so of conjugal affection. Peace and serenity ever welcomed him to his house, and true satisfaction departed not from his happy dwelling. Hence he found no cause to search abroad for the felicity which multitudes cannot find at home ; nor dreamed of the

the tavern and the club, the place of merriment and diversion, to drown the cares he never knew, to give the bliss he continually enjoyed.

Happy in so choice a companion, he was diligent to discharge, in the exactest degree, the parental duty towards those dear pledges of his love, wherewith their faithful embraces were blest. And hence from their earliest youth he took care to inspire them with every sentiment of true religion, and to bring them up in the faith and fear of that Almighty Father, a regard to whom, deeply rooted in the minds of children, is the most undoubted security of their regard to earthly parents.

As the connections of OSIANDER necessarily rendered his family large, he was conscientiously exact in the discharge of his duty to his domestics and servants. "Every man, he was wont to say, should esteem himself as a priest in his own family; and be therefore careful to instruct his dependents, as those of whom he must one day give a solemn account."

And, "One reason, he would often say, why men are generally so negligent of

this important duty, is the sad example they set themselves—an example which renders all precept ineffectual.” Hence he was diligent to maintain that prime pillar of domestic authority: he spoke by his life as well as his words; and never proposed a duty to his family, which they did not see him practice himself. Family prayer was never omitted in his house. The Sabbath-day was never spent in trifling, visiting, and folly; much less in drunkenness and debauchery. Attended by as many of his family as was convenient, he himself led the way to his church, both morning and afternoon; and the evening of that blessed day was ever spent in catechising and instructing the younger; in reading some useful discourse to the more advanced part of his household. — Never abstaining from the hallowed table of the Lord, he was earnest always in pressing that important duty; and few who lived with him were long strangers to that heavenly banquet.

Thus exemplary at home, he was no less esteemed abroad: his punctuality, honesty, and worth were universally commended;

mended; and though some of freer principles would sometimes be apt to sneer at his preciseness (as they termed it,) yet no man maintained a more universal credit, pursued his temporal business with more becoming alacrity, or, by the blessing of God, flourished more in all desirable success.

It pleased the Sovereign Disposer of all things to give him a long foresight of his approaching dissolution, by means of a lingering and consumptive illness.

Shall I ever forget with what delight I heard him declare his high hopes, when coming in by accident, I found him, with his beloved wife by his side; pale and emaciated he sat in the chair of sickness, his hand tenderly clasping hers, and his eyes fixed upon her; — while she, with soft affection, strove to conceal her heart-felt distress, and the tear, unpermitted to come forth, stood trembling in her eye. — “I was endeavouring, dear Sir, said he, to reconcile my life’s loved companion to the stroke which shortly must separate us — separate for a while — separate, blessed be the Lord of life, only to meet that we may
C 3 never

30 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

never more part,—But, alas! so frail is human nature, so weak is human faith, so attached are we to this poor crazy prison, that we cannot, we cannot be triumphant,—we sink and grovel upon earth even to the last.”

Affection like your's, said I, so long tried, and so tender, cannot be supposed to part without pangs: nor should we think ourselves the worse *Christians*, because we feel the most sensibly as *Men*.

“Oh no, said he, I have never thought the finest feelings of humanity inconsistent with the most elevated degree of Christian virtue—but, methinks, when a pair have lived, (as thanks be to God) my dearest wife and myself have constantly endeavoured to do—with a perpetual prospect to a future scene, and an earnest, though very imperfect labour to walk worthy our high calling and hope;—it should be matter of the noblest joy when the consummation of all our labours is at hand, when we are about to drop the veil of flesh, and to enter on the fruition of everlasting peace. Surely this should dry up all our tears, and cause us to rejoice on behalf of the friend
who

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 31

who is about — not to *die*, but to *live*; not to *lose* life, but to *enjoy* it.—For myself I have no more doubt of immortality, nor (let me speak it with due humility) of my own felicity with God, through *Jesus Christ*, than I have of my present existence. All nature, and the universal voice of the wise in every age proclaims the great doctrine: but the Christian Religion hath displayed it in such full light, so dispelled every cloud, so removed every scruple, that it would be the greatest indignity to the blessed Author of it, either to doubt a future and eternal existence, or to doubt an eternal and happy one through the faith that is in him. *Infidelity* appears to me of all sins the most monstrous, after those various declarations which God hath made to support and confirm our *faith*."

We were charmed at the divine warmth with which he uttered these words: his wife burst into a flood of tears; tears of mingled joy and sadness; who could refrain? We sat silent:—He at length went on.

32 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

“ Yet let me not be thought presumptuous : I know the utter abhorrence of God to the least spark of self-dependance ; I know the absolute contrariety of pride to the true interest of a fallen creature : I am nothing ; I have nothing ; I can do nothing : to the glory of his grace be all I have ever done, be all I ever hope ! But there is such an exhaustless fund of unexampled mercy and love in the great Saviour of mankind, so wonderful are his doings, so passing all comprehension his tender regards for the children of men, that I dare not dispute his rich offers ; that I dare not hesitate in the embracing his full promises ! Oh, Sir, I can say, with the utmost sincerity, that the reflection on his mercies is my sole and unspeakable comfort ; and in his love I already taste something of the bliss I expect. Influenced by that love, and by a sincere (though alas most weak) faith in him, I have laboured diligently to act in conformity to his will : and though conscious of a thousand and ten thousand infirmities, though in my best services utterly unprofitable, though in all less than the least of his mercies,
yet

yet I have an unshaken confidence in his all-sufficient merits, and fully relying upon them, I commit my soul to him, with all the satisfaction and serenity of calm and well-grounded hope.—He is a rock that can never fail us: the cross of *Christ* promiseth the sinner every thing which Repentance can presume to ask.”

Much more passed between us, some things far too tender to be committed to paper; and it will not be any wonder to the serious reader to be told, that a sickness of some weeks was borne by a man of such faith, with all the chearful resignation and consummate patience which are peculiar to the true Christian.

—Nothing would be more instructive, perhaps, than many of the discourses which he held with his friends, during the scene of trial.—A few hours before he died, he took a solemn leave of his wife and children, to whom he had delivered at large his dying advice—and perfectly sensible of his approaching dissolution; some minutes before he expired he was heard to say, “O Death, where is thy sting! O Grave, where is thy victory!”

34 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

victory! The King of Death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law,—but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” And having said this, he fell asleep, with a composure perfectly lovely, with a peace infinitely desirable.

C H A P. IV.

Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows. Matthew x. 29, &c.

Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in Me. Jeremiah xlix. 11.

FEW passions are more strongly implanted in the human mind, than the love of our offspring; to be devoid of which degrades the human, far beneath the irrational creature; through every species of which the wonderful influence of parental *storge* is discernible. The wisdom of the great Creator is immediately obvious in this gracious provision for

for the helpless young; and it is certain that this powerful affection in the human species, may be rendered productive of the most excellent effects.

Too commonly, indeed, it is grossly abused; and the honourable claim of parental regard is made the pretence for an unworthy and mean attachment to the pursuits of the world, and the love of this life. Many men cheat *themselves* under this specious delusion; and while they conceive that the spring of their actions, and the cause of their singular attention to earthly desires, is the laudable purpose of providing for their families; they are, the mean while, but following the bent of their own inclinations, and treading in a track which they would continue to tread were they not influenceed at all by the motive which they fancy engages them in it. Frequent experience hath manifested this; but it was never seen more evidently, perhaps, than in the case of AVARO; who lived only for his children, as he constantly avowed, and on that account denied himself every reasonable gratification; when, as if it were, to falsify those

36 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

pretences, as well as to awaken him, if possible, to a more rational conduct, the Sovereign of Heaven deprived him of his children in a short compass of time; and lo, he remains the same groveling earth-worm, tho' he hath none to share that inheritance, which he purchases at the price of his soul!

If any truth be fully revealed in the sacred oracles, if any hath the sanction of the soundest reason, it is the belief of a wise, good, and superintending Providence, of an universal Father, who tenderly watcheth over, and graciously careth for the concerns of those beings whom himself hath created, and placed in their several stations upon earth; a truth of an aspect the most benign, and of an influence the most important to all the affairs of men: to forget and disregard which leads to all the folly of self-seeking, all the madness of self-dependance, all the bitter anxiety of self-corroding care: to remember, and live under the constant persuasion of which induces all the sweetness of a serene conscience, all the fortitude of a resigned soul,

soul, all the comfort of an unshaken hope.

And to this, were we to judge by the rules of right reason, or religion, that parental affection, which is so universal and amiable, must naturally bend every parent: whom, if no other consideration were sufficient to persuade to the practice of Religion, and to a dependance upon the Deity; the reflection of its infinite moment to their offspring, and of the unspeakable value of the divine favour should powerfully incline thereto. For there is no patrimony like the divine protection, and no friendship so stable as the friendship of Heaven. The former can never be exhausted, never be alienated; the latter will never fail or forsake us: no change of circumstances will change its fidelity: nay, much unlike the friendship of the world, in the black day of adversity it will smile with most sweetness and affection upon us. Our earthly schemes, in behalf of our children, may prove unsuccessful, and be blasted by the finger of disappointment: our labours may end in vexation, and all our attempts be insufficient

to

38 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

to secure the fortune we wish: or do we secure it; the patrimony we have gained, at the expence of so much care and anxiety, nay, perhaps at the high price even of *felicity eternal*, may be embezzled by the faithless guardian; devoured by the litigious lawyer; or foolishly squandered away by the spendthrift heir; whom our industry has capacitated to sink into the foul sewers of idleness, vice, and sloth; and deprived at once of the comforts of this life, and the hopes of a better, by supplying him with the means to be iniquitous; when perhaps without them he had been led to careful industry, to sobriety, and all the blessed fruits of a rational demeanour.

Let it not be concluded from hence, that we would condemn that proper care for the subsistence of a family, which all nations have judged necessary and becoming. We mean only to decry that absurd, but too common practice of living merely to lay up wealth for those who shall survive us; without taking care to secure the favour of Providence, without looking at all to the great superintendant

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 89

perintendent of Roman affairs, who laughs, with just contempt, at the spider-webs which men of this character so industriously weave. Without God in their lives, without hope in their death, they are unable calmly to lay their dying heads on their pillow, or to commend, with humble, but confident faith, their weeping widow and orphans to the heavenly *Husband*, and the everlasting *Father*.

Of these, poor NEGOTIO never thought, and therefore could derive no comfort to himself, could administer no comfort to his wife and his children, from the solid expectation of the fatherly care of omnipotence. This rendered his death doubly dreadful: as the contrary view soothed every sorrow, and cheered every gloom before the face of the departing OBSERVER. He beheld his wife and his children with an eye of gladness, as the peculiar care of the *Father* of the *Fatherless*, and the *Husband* of the *Widow*: and to that care he consigned them with a cheerful hope and peaceful acquiescence. NEGOTIO saw his family with the eye of distraction,

40 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

tion, as the prey of poverty, and the sport of an injurious world. Unaccustomed to estimate worth by any other standard than that of earthly acquisitions, he considered them as unavoidably miserable: and leaving them unprovided with what the world calls good, he left them, as it seemed to him, *desolate*; and doomed to all the contempt of penury, and all the painful pity of distress! —Such was the issue of his anxious solicitude for temporal things—Oh happy had it been for thee, NEGOTIO, happy for thy family, if some portion of thy anxiety had been allotted to eternal concerns; then hadst thou died in the pleasing reflection, that not void of attention to thy great business on earth, thou wast going thyself to the kingdom of a *Father*, who watcheth with peculiar attention over the *orphan* and the *widow*, especially when consigned by the faithful parent to his secure protection: and who is equally able to save by *many* as by *few*: to bless where there is little, as well as where there is much: to bless with the most substantial blessings—*competency, content, and a good*
con-

conscience: which bestow those consolations, solid, secure, immoveable, that are denied frequently, or sought for in vain by the distinguished favourites of exorbitant wealth or redundant power.

Conscious hereof, OSIANDER, during his last sickness, was never deficient in pouring this healing balm into the bleeding heart of his life's lov'd companion, and softer friend.

"*Widowhood*", he was often wont to say to her, is doubtless a state of the deepest distress; left to weather out all the storms and tempests of a calamitous world, a poor dejected woman then most wants the tender support of the husband, whose loss those very wants more feelingly teach her. Not only every source of usual satisfaction is dried up: not only every allowable and life-cheering comfort is cut off: but the flood-gates are opened to a tide of new troubles, unknown, unthought of before: which the memory of past felicities mournfully enhanceth; the retrospect of happiness

* See the fine speech of St. *Cbrysestom's* mother, in his piece on the *Priesthood*, or in the *Christian's Magazine*, Vol. I. p. 54.

42 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

once enjoyed, but now lost, adding double weight to the woe which springs up unwelcome in the place of that happiness.—Even where the affection hath not been of the most tender sort, the loss of a husband is a calamity severely felt: but where it hath been just and sincere, where long-tried fidelity hath much approved each to the other, there, my love, as the parting becomes more afflictive, so the loss is more sensibly felt. Widowhood is then an *iron furnace* indeed.—But to catch the allusion, as the Son of God was seen in the furnace with the three faithful *Israelites*, preserving them unhurt from the rage of the flames; so will he be present, with peculiar protection, and shield with his fatherly providence, the widow and her orphans.—*Leave thy fatherless children, saith this kind God, I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in me.*—This passage, I will freely confess to you, hath at all times given the greatest comfort to my mind, and at the same time encouraged me to a chearful discharge of duty and to perfect dependance on God: conscious, that if I could by any
means

means secure the fatherly care of omnipotence for you, and my dear children, I need not be anxious for ought beside; I have endeavoured to keep this point in view: and I can now commend you to that care, with the most joyful and heart-felt delight. For the Lord will never leave you nor forsake you: He is emphatically stiled *the father of the fatherless, and the husband of the widow*. A reflection which surely must make every tender parent, every affectionate husband religious, and careful to obtain God's blessing, if really they love their children, if really they have a regard for their wives:—For that God hath shewn, all through his blessed word, how near and dear to him are the interests of the widow and the orphan: He hath given peculiar laws, with much tenderness, respecting them: He hath urged, as the greatest offence, the neglect and injury of them: He hath made it one of the characteristic parts of true and undeviled religion, to visit the *fatherless* and *widows* in their affliction. And as an emblem of his ever full and flowing mercy towards them, he sent his Prophet to
 one

44 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

one of them in the day of distress, and enriched her with a continual supply, while want and famine were reigning around: giving at once a proof and a significant token of his fatherly providence, and encreasing mercies to the *widow* who *trusteth* in him.

For, my dear love, permit me to say, though I have scarce any need to say it to you, that these rich promises to *widows* are not given indiscriminately and under no conditions: it may be very possible to languish in all the wretchedness of a widowed state, and yet to enjoy none of the distinguishing care of Heaven. St Paul speaks of those who are *widows indeed*; which plainly implies, that some in a state of *widowhood* may be far from the Divine notice. A *widow indeed*, according to him, is *one, who trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayer night and day*; one, who is truly sensible of the afflictive hand of providence upon her; who endeavours to receive with meekness, and to improve in resignation by, the chastising stroke; who fixeth her soul's dependence upon the high and gracious providence of

of her God, and laboureth with all the sincerity of faith, and fervour of prayer, to cast herself and all her concerns upon him, as knowing he careth for her.

And as thus *trusting* in God, and *continuing in prayer*, the widow should be particularly grave, serious, and sober in all her behaviour, dress, and deportment: she should not forget that God hath been pleased to cut off, if I may so say, the ornament of her head, and the pride of her life; and therefore requireth a decent solemnity in all her carriage. If the loss happens to a woman in earlier life, she hath need of more particular watchfulness against all the attacks of carnal enemies; and should be cautious not to give the least room for that reproach, either of wantonness or calumny, which some are so apt to impute to widowhood in general.

And should she, my dear, be left in your case, with a family around her, oh! how much anxiety attends that necessary, that important charge; that most tender duty which she oweth to them!—I cannot, indeed I cannot speak of this heavy burden: my heart is too full; and I
have

46 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

have perfect satisfaction in your motherly love to my dear children; But do not sink under the burthen, for God is with you: He will bless your endeavours: he will support you in every difficulty.—
Leave thy fatherless children to me, I will preserve them alive, saith He: *alive*, that is, in Grace; *alive* to the only valuable, the divine life; *alive* to himself! Oh! sweet and comfortable promise, let it always be your support; and rest perfectly confident, that while you exert your best, though feeble efforts, for your children, the father of the fatherless will more than second you: trust in him: continue in prayer to him for them and for yourself: and you have a *Husband* infinitely preferable to this poor perishing mortal who is about to leave you — they my beloved pretty orphans,—have a *father*—“ Oh! thou gracious father, preserve, protect, defend, both *her* and *them*—and when my weeping eyes shall be closed in death; when my supplicating tongue shall be silent in dust; when my solicitous heart shall cease to throb for them! Oh! be thou their never-failing, their immortal *husband, father, friend!*

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 47

friend!—their God and portion in this life and in that to come—Oh may we meet, meet to part no more—meet to praise and adore thy exceeding loving kindness, through endless ages in glory.”

Thus spoke OSIANDER; and happy that husband who thus, like him, can pour the balm of divine consolation into the heart of his afflicted and lamenting partner.

C H A P. V.

*Still frowns grim Death: Guilt points the tyrant's spear.
And whence all human guilt?—From Death forgot!*
YOUNG.

WERE it possible to avoid the stroke, or to escape the victorious arm of *Death*; they would have something to plead for their conduct, who shun with all their power, the solemn reflection; who make it the whole business of their lives to dissipate the important thought of that, for which they were created, and to which they are inevitably doomed! But as no human power can arrest, even for one moment, the fatal dart; as every individual must pass this black and lamentable flood; surely

48 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

surely wisdom dictates a serious and frequent attention to so interesting a concern, and reason advises the most diligent survey of this dreadful evil; that we may learn to encounter it with courage, or, at least, to submit to it without reluctance. *Death*, viewed with an hasty and trembling eye, appears in formidable terror, as the cruel blaster of all human hopes and joys; but *Death* viewed with an eye of faith, and contemplated with the coolness of rational deliberation, loses much of its terror, and is approached with no small degree of complacency and peace.

You tremble at the fear of *Death*: come, draw near, and let us see what that is, which thus alarms your quickest apprehensions. Seen in the most fearful garb, *Death* is only the ransomer of frail mortals from the prison of a sinful, painful, and corrupted frame; their deliverer from a transitory, and vexatious world; their introducer to an eternal and —oh that we could always add—a *blessed* state! But there, there alas, is the dread. 'Tis this which cloaths *Death* in his terrors, and gives all its sharpness to his

his sting. Could we be assured, had we a rational and well-grounded presumption, that the departing soul should enter on a state of felicity, and be received into the bosom of its Saviour and its God; we should then universally lay down the load of mortality, not only without regret, but with triumph.

Whence then comes it to pass—let us no longer lay the blame on *Death*, for it is fairly exculpated—whence comes it to pass, that we dare to live, without treasuring up “this rational and well-grounded presumption,” which the Christian religion so copiously supplies, and which we are called upon to treasure up by every motive of interest, of common sense, and of duty! If we neglect this, let us not pretend to quarrel with our fate, and to repine at the fearfulness of death; we ourselves give all his fearfulness to him, and from ourselves alone proceeds the cause of our bitterest disquietude. For God hath plainly declared to us the irreversible condition of our nature. Our death is no less certain than our existence. He hath graciously provided a sovereign and infallible

D

anti-

50 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

antidote against the fear of death, in the victorious resurrection of his son. He hath informed us, that our bodies must return to dust; that all our possessions must be left behind; and that a state everlasting and unalterable awaits us—a state of bliss with him, or of misery with condemned spirits.

If then, my soul, deaf to his informations, and regardless of his mercies, thou shalt forget the condition of thy nature; pride thyself in the beauties of thy present body; boast thyself in the possessions of thy present state; neglect to secure an interest in thy Saviour, by faith unfeigned, and obedience unreserved—thine, and thine eternally will be the just condemnation: nor canst thou wonder that the stroke of death, in this view, is horrible to thy apprehension; for it will separate thee from all thou holdest dear, and it will convey thee to a region, dolorous and unwelcome, where thou hast no treasure, and canst not have either *hope* or *love*. But remember, in this case, *Death* deserves no blame; for it is not *Death* which is terrible in itself; it is *man*,

man, foolish man, who renders it so, by his inexcusable neglect.

It is from hence arises the fear of death; from *estimating* too highly the things of this life, and from *forgetting* the *immutable condition* annexed to every mortal blessing. Hence sprung all the mistakes, and all the miseries of the young, the lovely MISSELLA; and all the piercing pangs, which tore her wretched parents hearts.

MISSELLA was blest, by the great river of all good gifts, with a frame peculiarly elegant and pleasing. Softness and sweetness dwelt in her countenance; the down of the swan was rivalled by her skin; her shape was faultless, her limbs were finished with the most beautiful symmetry, and her voice was musical as the harmony of the lute. She was taught from her cradle to value this fine person: and her fond and overweening parents fed the soothing vanity with every food which their dotage could supply. Her education was perfectly polite, adapted to set off the graces of her frame, little calculated to expand or improve the more valuable beauties of the mind.

Her taste for dress was remarkably elegant, her manner of dancing particularly genteel; she excelled much at cards, and few were happier in devising schemes, and engaging parties of pleasure. As her voice was charming in itself, so was it improved by art, and aided by the soft touches of the guitar, which she handled with inimitable grace; preferring it to all other instruments, as the attitude in playing upon it, is most advantageous for the discovery of a fair lady's gentility.

She very early gave her parents a convincing proof of the mistake they had made in her education, and of their unhappiness in neglecting to inculcate the principles of religious duty and conscientious virtue. For, in her *seventeenth* year, she married a young officer, of inferior rank, and no fortune, with the intire disapprobation of her parents, nay, and in direct contradiction to their commands. The gaiety of his dress, and the charms of his person, captivated her heart; and, unaccustomed to reason and think, she broke through every obligation to gratify her romantic passion.

The

The blind and excessive fondness of her parents soon induced them to pass over this breach of duty, and to welcome their darling daughter and her husband to their affectionate arms. Accustomed from her cradle to a life of dissipation and pleasure, now that she was free from all parental restraint, she indulged the mad propensity with still greater ardour. From one public place to another, during the summer, she led her passive husband; during the winter they lived in all the fatiguing gaiety of town diversions. A child was the issue of their marriage; but as the *daughter* had been before, so now the *mother* was swallowed up in the woman of pleasure: she sent the little infant to her parents, regardless of its welfare, if she could pursue her beloved gratifications. — The case was the same with a second produce of their conjugal endearments. She looked upon *child-bearing* as a severe tax paid by the fair sex; and as an obstacle in their way to the possession of those delights, which alone have worth and relish in the esteem of a woman of fashion.

My Reader will not be amazed, if a life of this kind produced no small difficulties in their circumstances. Her parents, though not very affluent, readily contributed all they could: and ah! too fond—fed scantily and drest meanly that their daughter might be clad in *scarlet*, and feast in *delicacy*. It happened very opportunely, that her husband, in the third year of their marriage, was called abroad to attend his regiment. Pleasure was her passion; she felt therefore little regret at parting with him. Nor did she live, during his absence, like the *widowed* wife, and separated friend. She followed her diversions with redoubled assiduity; was the life of the ball, the delight of the men, the queen of joy.—But her constitution, tender and delicate, was unequal to the toil; her nocturnal reveries extinguished the rose in her cheek; her laborious life of pleasure induced a consumption. Besides this, with declining health, her character became equivocal; (though it is agreed by all, she was never *criminal*, in the sense that word is commonly used:) but the want of *appearances* is often as fatal

fatal to reputation, as even the want of *virtue* itself. To exhilarate her spirits she had frequent course to improper means; to renoate her beauty, she had constant recourse to destructive art.

Her parents, who seldom saw her,—saw her only for a few passing moments, which she could sometimes, though very rarely, steal from her engagements, to dedicate to the children of her bowels, and to the *parents*, whose only joy, she knew, was in her company.—Her parents hearing of her declining state, wrote, intreated, earnestly and with tears intreated her to come to them, and to use all proper means for the recovery of her health. She deigned them no reply; but using what appeared to her the necessary method, yet prosecuting at the same time, her usual course of pleasure—a dead body almost in the bright scenes of revelry and joy,—she at length was seized with an acute disorder, which in two days carried her off, in a strange place; at a distance from her friends; and without a relation to close her eyes!

A messenger was instantly dispatched to her parents; the parent only can

guess at their anguish. The afflicted father flew down to the place of her death with all possible speed; and when he entered the house, where lay the dead body of his child, his only child, the child of his soul—"Oh give me my daughter, he cried out, let me but see her dear face, though she is dead; lead me, lead me to my child—shew a poor old man the sad remains of all his hopes and wishes." Dumb grief prevailed: the mistress of the house conducted him to the door of the room, where lay the pale and lifeless corpse. He threw himself, with unutterable distress, on the bed beside his daughter, and bedewing her clay-cold face with tears, lay for some time in all the agony of silent sorrow! "Are we thus to meet, at length he burst out, thus?—Oh my KITTY, my child, my daughter, are those dear lips ever sealed in silence? Ah, all pale and white! and will those eyes, which used to look upon me with such joy, never, never open more! One word, my child, oh if it were but one word! Ah cruel and unkind—that I might not be allowed to watch thee in thy sickness! hadst thou

permitted me to attend, thy dear life had been saved—Alas, why do I rave, she hears me not—pale, indeed; but lovely as ever! Ah soft and precious hand, marble in coldness.—I will never let thee go.—Oh my KIRRY, my child, my only beloved!—I am undone, for thou art no more; oh that I had died with thee; would to God I might die this moment! My KIRRY, my child, my daughter, my all!—Here again he burst into an agony of tears, and betrayed all the signs of the most afflicted grief.

But it is unnecessary to dwell longer on this part of our tale; it will be more proper to make some remarks upon it: these, however, together with the very different character of PULCHERIA, must engage the next chapter.

of the former, to is there the same chance,
 D 5 CHAP.
 that all who enjoy this advantage must
 go right; that all who enjoy it not, must
 inevitably go wrong. This would be to
 contradict palpable experience. But we
 are bold to advance, that as there is the
 one, in favour

C H A P. VI.

- Take compassion on the rising age;
- In them redeem your errors manifold;
- And by due discipline and nurture sage,
- In Virtue's love betimes your docile sons engage.

WEST'S Poem on Education.

HOW great a blessing is early instruction! MISCELLA never heard the sweetly persuasive lectures of wisdom; she was never called to attend the winning voice of Religion and Truth: and therefore, left to the blind conduct of impetuous passions, she was driven along, "to every wave a scorn;" she foundered and was lost!—We do not pretend to say, that early instruction and virtue are so inseparably connected as never to be divided: we do not say, that all who enjoy this advantage must go right; that all who enjoy it not, must infallibly go wrong. This would be to contradict palpable experience. But we are bold to advance, that as there is the chance of ten thousand to one, in favour of the former; so is there the same chance,

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 59

chance, it is feared, against the latter. How alarming a reflection to parents!

Had **MISELLA**, from her early infancy been trained up in the knowledge of herself, her God, and her duty; had she been carefully led to a true estimate of her corruptible frame; not deceived into a wrong opinion of it, from poisonous flattery, and delusive adulation: had she been taught, that every good gift comes from God, and consequently can be no proper subject of human vanity; had she been taught, that God expects a proper return and reasonable service for the bounty he shews; that our present is a state of trial, that we are pilgrims and probationers of a day; and must necessarily in a short time remove our tent from this world, and live——live everlastingly in another, happy or wretched, as we have performed our duty in this:—Had these lessons of useful import been early and steadily imprinted on her mind; most probably the miserable parent had not wept, in such anguish, over his more miserable daughter: most probably her hands

60 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

might have closed, with filial piety and tenderness, his aged eyes!

But—ah me—how constantly do we behold these important lessons neglected! while fond and over-weaning parents, like those of MISSELLA, cheat their little ones, even from infancy, into false opinions of themselves! The mistakes so frequent and so fatal, in the education of children, would *almost* lead one to approve the LACEDEMONIAN policy, which allowed not to *parents* the liberty of educating their own children; but committed this most necessary business to the care of the state. And from an accurate observation of the conduct of parents, how few have yet fallen within the observation of the writer of these lines, who were tolerably capacitated for the task: who had prudence and fortitude enough to conquer parental prejudices; and to stand superior to the soft foibles of melting affection! With respect to the *gentler* sex, it is an evil too notorious to be denied, that ere the pretty innocents can hush their pleasing tales; they are initiated into the school of pride and shew; taught to reverence dress e-
ven

ven to superstition; and to behold, with an eye of satisfaction, the glare of alluring finery!—The mind thus early vitiated strongly retains the taste; vanity and modish folly engross the whole attention; and ruin half, or render trifling and insipid, half, the female world.—For it is a fact, I apprehend, scarcely to be controverted, that in the *lower* order of life, more women are seduced into prostitution, through their *love of dress*, than through their love of vice; and in the *higher*, we know, to what lengths an attachment to this deep-rooted foible is carried!

With such principles, strongly impressed, how can we expect to find in the fair one, the endearing and sensible companion, — replete, as *Milton* phrases it, — with all good, wherein consists

Woman's domestic honor, and chief praise:

while as he goes on, they are—How can we expect it?

Bred

*Bred only and compleated to the taste
Of lustful appetite ; to dance, to sing,
To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye ! **

Let it not be said, that the writer is severe : he would only wish to hold out a friendly warning, against an evil destructive to the tender and affectionate parent ; upon whom it lies to give to the female elegance its greatest merit : while he intreats the inconsiderate and the fond to contemplate the half-distracted father weeping over the clay-cold corse of his MISCELLA.

And wouldst thou, oh reader, wish thy beloved offspring a better fate ; would thou wish never to share in the horrors of so sad a distress ;——let it be thy chief study early and diligently to inform with true wisdom, the young, the waxen mind ; attentive to the poet's remark :

*Children like tender osiers take the bow,
And as they first are fashioned, always grow.*

Sensible of this capital truth, the parents of the amiable PULCHERIA omitted no opportunity to cultivate her mind,
and

* *Par. lost xi. 616.*

and early to lead her into the pure and peaceful paths of sacred wisdom. She was not inferior in *person* to MISSELLA; but in *conduct* how superior, in *death* how different! As I have not had the happiness to converse with many, from whom I have reaped greater improvement or received more delight; as I have never attended a death-bed, with more profit, and edification, than that of the ever-valued PULCHERIA; it hath frequently made me curious to learn from her parents the method they pursued in her education — And one day sitting with her excellent father, I took the liberty to hint my desire — “I know, sir, (said I) you are above the vulgar prejudices; and have so just a sense of the divine wisdom and goodness in removing your daughter from this state of probation to a realm of glory; that the subject is rather pleasing, than painful to you. You know my high opinion of her virtues; tell me what particular steps you took, in her early days, to lay the foundation of that noble structure, which she reared?”

“You judge rightly, sir, said the good old man; it is pleasing to me to think and

64 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

and to talk of my daughter, whom I reflect upon with the most heart-felt complacence, as having soon run her compleat circle of virtues here; * as having speedily finished her course, and entered so early on her everlasting reward. Praised be God, for giving me such a child; praised be God, for vouchsafing to me the sight of so triumphant a death; praised be God, for placing before me such an example.—Forgive the involuntary tear—I cannot on this occasion withhold it; the remembrance of my dear angel so affects and ravishes me: oh when will the hour come, that I shall once more see her—once more meet her for ever to enjoy her lovely converse—meet her—Dear sir, excuse me, the pleasing hope overpowers me; excuse the parent; excuse the man.”—We sat silent a few minutes; some natural tears we mutually dropt—but wiped them soon; when my worthy friend proceeded.

* The speaker perhaps had the following celebrated lines of *Waller* in view.

Circles are prais'd, not that abound
In largeness, but th' exactly round;
So life we praise, that doth excel,
Not in much time, but acting well.

“ I

"I will satisfy your desire: I did indeed lay down some few rules, respecting the education of my child; and they were invariably regarded: I will tell you the most material of them. Attribute it to the weakness of an old man's memory, if I am not altogether so perfect in them as I wish.

"In care, reproof, correction, and encouragement, my wife and myself (as all parents should) resolved to act, and ever acted, in perfect concert.—We early taught our child implicit *submission* to ourselves, assured, that otherwise we should be able to teach her nothing.—It was our care to remove all bad examples, far as possible from her sight; and in consequence to be cautious in our choice of domestics.—We endeavoured always, to *understand* ourselves, what we wished our child to understand; to *be* ourselves, what we would have her be; to *do* ourselves, what we would have her practice; as knowing that parents are the original models, upon which children form their tempers and behaviour.—We laboured gradually and pleasingly to infuse into the mind

mind the clearest and most affecting notions of God ; his universal presence ; almighty power ; his goodness, truth and over-ruling providence ; his regard to pious men, and attention to their prayers. These things we imprinted upon the tender spirit, and fixed them by those striking examples,* wherewith the sacred writings abound.—We took care, that she should frequently hear conversation upon serious and heavenly subjects, to which she used to attend as matters of curiosity ; and from which she caught much of a religious and proper spirit. Few people are sensible of the advantage derived to children from suitable and serious conversation.—It was our most earnest study, early to shew her the vanity of the world : the frailty of the body : the corruption of our fallen nature, the dignity and infinite worth of the *soul* ; and to make her acquainted, as she was capable, with what God hath done

* Such particularly as those of *Noah, Abraham, Joseph, &c.* the passage of the *Israelites* through the *Red Sea* ; the miracles in the wilderness ; the deliverance of *Daniel* ; and of the three *Israelites* from the furnace.—The miracles of *Christ* ; of the apostles, &c.

done for that soul; to set before her all the riches and mercy of redemption.—

We constantly inculcated upon her, this important truth, that she was not created to live here below, but in the glorious and eternal world above; and that she was placed here only to have her virtue tried and exercised, that she might be made fit to live for ever in heaven.—

“ And therefore, my dear, you see, (I used to observe) that there can be no room for pride in your person, or vanity in any external endowments. For your body is the workmanship of the great God; you cannot make one hair of your head white or black; and your body is but the prison, if I may so say, of your nobler part, which is immortal, and must share in the rewards or punishments of futurity, while your body will moulder in corruption, and become so odious, that your nearest and dearest friends cannot approach it—Remember, you have received all you are and all you have from God; therefore never presume to assign any merit to yourself; nor estimate any thing here below, at too high a rate: for this life you perceive is only a state
of

68 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

of trial, and of consequence unworthy our too fond attachment. Heaven is your home; God is your father; and eternity is your life."—But pardon me, dear sir, I digress from my rules, and like an old man indeed, fall into downright prating.—

Satisfied that all Religion stands or falls with the breach of the Sabbath, we habituated our dear child from her infancy, to sanctify that sacred day: to esteem highly the word of God; to reverence his ordinances, and to respect his ministers. And we were especially careful, that with all religious instruction (you know my own sentiments) she should imbibe a spirit of universal candor, goodness, and charity: as far from the wildness of *enthusiasm*, as from the narrowness of *superstition* and *bigotry*.—We always addressed her understanding, and treated her as a *rational* * creature: we encouraged her enquiries, and used

* We suppose, that by this remark the gentleman means to express his disapprobation of the simple method, in which many ignorant nurses, (we would not say *parents*,) treat children; as if they imagined them mere little animals, unconcerned with rationality.

her betimes to think and to reason. We represented *vice* in its true colours, which are the most odious; and *virtue* in her proper form of beauty and loveliness.—We were especially diligent to give her a deep sense of *truth* and *integrity*; and an abhorrence of all manner of falshood, fraud, craft, subterfuge, and dissimulation, as base, dishonourable, and highly displeasing to the all-wise. Assured that we could not cherish *veracity* too much, we never were severe for any fault she ingenuously acknowledged; but always, while we strove to convince her of the wrong she had done, we honoured and commended her for the truth she had spoken.—Convinced of the countless evils which attend the female sex from their passion for dress and shew, we endeavoured all in our power to give her a low, that is, a true opinion of these things; and though she always wore such apparel in her younger days as became her rank and station, yet we never deceived her into a wrong opinion of herself by gaudy, external ornaments.—If we had, how could we have excused ourselves? —When—

—Whenever we observed any thing tending to a bold, pert, or forward behaviour, (though blessed be God, there was even from her infancy little appearance of this — she seemed to be born meek and humble) yet if ever we observed this it was checked immediately: we knew that it might grow up into a flippant pertness, or a dissolute insolence.

—From many examples before us, we saw the misfortune of suffering children to be *men* and *women* too soon; for children are, by no means, fit to govern themselves, or to direct others: we avoided this dangerous rock. — Soon as she was able to apply to the business of instruction, we inured her to diligence and close application, yet not so close, as to deprive her of such amusement and exercise as were proper to preserve chearfulness, vivacity, and health. And you, who knew her, (good Sir) and her many accomplishments, will do me the justice to believe, that we permitted her not to want any advantages of increasing in wisdom and knowledge, and that she did not abuse those advantages.

—I had forgot to observe, that we taught

taught her most assiduously the duty of humanity; for we taught her to reverence the human nature even in the lowest; we suffered her not to treat any with contempt; but to shew all possible acts of tenderness and charity, cherishing with all our might a spirit of modesty and gentleness, of benevolence and compassion, even to insects and animals: from an allowed and wanton *crudelty* to which, children often receive a barbarous and inhuman disposition*.

And the fruits were equal to our labours—the lovely plant well repayed all our care and tendance.”

To shew that this was not merely the remark of parental partiality, let us proceed to take a view, in our next Chapter, of the amiable *PULCHERIA* in her life and death.

* See advice to a daughter.

C H A P. VII.

Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.

Prov. xxxi. 30.

OUR obligations are great to those parents who carefully train up their children in the paths of Wisdom and Virtue; that they may be enabled to discharge every social duty with propriety. And as so much of the comfort and peace of human life depends upon the fair sex; we are doubly indebted to those who early inform their tender minds; and deliver into the hands of the husband not only the lovely mistress, but the endearing companion, and heart-approved friend. This was the constant, and the successful endeavour of the parents of PULCHERIA; some of whose *rules* in the education of their child, were delivered in the foregoing Chapter.

An education so wise and rational, could scarce be supposed to have failed of the desired effect. The modesty, understanding, and elegance of PULCHERIA

RIA

RIA were generally observed, and the charms of her person, though of the first rate, were always eclipsed by the superior beauties of her mind. She was sensible, but not assuming; humble, but not mean; familiar, but not loquacious; religious, but not gloomy. The tenderness and delicacy of her sentiments peculiarly recommended her; and that sweet temper, which never suffered her to indulge the malevolence of censure, rendered her the object of universal esteem. I speak not of her *accidental* acquirements, her skill in music, her taste for painting, &c. nor of her *domestick* knowledge: suffice it to say, she was well accomplished in these, and in every improvement which her parents could supply, or she could make.

The happy BENVOLIO, with the perfect approbation of her parents, received this rich treasure to his embraces, and called the lovely PULCHERIA his, in her twenty-first year. He was the object of her choice; and his acknowledged worth well justified her heart's attachment to him. The fruits of her parents care were now abundantly manifest; *Benvo-*

his thought—and justly thought—his lot peculiarly blessed, in a wife of so refined and elegant a disposition. Their felicity was consummate, as the strongest and most undissembled affection can produce. Their pleasures were mutual; and of *separate* satisfactions,——happy pair—they had not the idea!

Her servants could never be large enough in her praises; for she treated them always with the most amiable humanity: “she considered them, she used to say, as fellow-creatures, placed indeed in an inferior station; but not on that account the less acceptable in the sight of God. Nay, if we remembered, (she would observe) who it was that for our sakes took upon him the *form of a servant*, we should certainly treat our domestics with becoming gentleness. Besides, she would go on, it appears to me an office of common humanity, to render a state of servitude and dependance as light and pleasing as possible: for while we, by the bounty of Heaven, enjoy such superior blessings, shall we not, in gratitude, do all in our power to bless others who are less favoured by
Pro-

Providence? I esteem my servants as a kind of meaner, humbler friends; and though I would on no account make myself too familiar with them, or listen either to their flattery or their tales; yet I never would be deficient in alleviating their inconveniencies, and promoting their real happiness."

Acting upon these principles, she was the darling of her domestics; they beheld her with a degree of veneration. She was so happy as seldom to find cause to change; and she never entertained her friends with tedious tales of the ill behaviour and vileness of her servants. I should observe, that she was careful to see them well instructed in their duty; and for that purpose she not only supplied them with proper books, but saw that they read them. And her worthy husband omitted no opportunity to assist in this necessary service.

Conscious of the high obligation upon us to observe the *sabbath*, she strictly devoted that day to duty. She took care that such of her family as could possibly be spared, should always attend with her, at the morning and evening ser-

vice of the *parish church*. This *she esteemed* an indispensable duty; and never allowed herself to ramble from church to church, as was the case with some ladies of her familiar acquaintance, whose practice she constantly disapproved. "I owe this duty, she used to say, to my family, to my neighbours, to my minister: and I cannot tell what evil may arise from a different example." The evening of the Sabbath was always spent in religious exercises; and she never would think of seeing company on that day. Routs on *Sundays* were monsters in her apprehensions. "I can excuse, she would often observe, those in the lower stations of life, who have no other day of leisure but the Sabbath, and who perhaps are pent up in narrow shops all the rest of the week, if they dedicate some part of the day to recreation: but for *us*, who have the enjoyment of all the week, surely it is inexcusable to devote this sacred day to our pleasures. Shall not the great giver of all receive a tribute of some small portion of our time?"

But

But were I to dwell upon all the excellencies of her life and conduct, the limits prescribed me in this paper would soon be exceeded. I shall omit, therefore, any account of the benevolent charity which she exercised so largely, (inasmuch that never child of distress went with heavy heart, and unrelieved from her presence)—while I hasten to give some account of her death. Her constitution was delicate; after the birth of the second beloved infant which she brought her BENVOLIO, (her first died early, and gave an opportunity for the display of the most exemplary resignation) she caught a cold, which was accompanied with unhappy circumstances; and though she recovered in some measure, yet the consequence was hasty decay.

It is easy to conceive the anguish of her parents and her husband upon so melancholy an occasion; upon a discovery that all the efforts of art, and all the powers of medicine were in vain. While her patience and resignation obliged them to refrain from every word of repining; though it tended to increase

their sorrow by enhancing their esteem for her. Happy as I was in her friendship, it was my custom often to visit her during her long and trying illness; but I shall not easily forget an interview at the close of it, which, I must confess, wholly unmanned me, while it taught me the deepest humility.

I found her seated in the chair of sickness, in her chamber, with her little infant lying in her lap, over which she hung with such a look of maternal fondness and anxiety, as I yet never saw, and which no painting could express! Soon as I advanced, she lifted up her eyes, in which stood the big, the affectionate drops; while death seemed to sit upon her countenance, wan, yet not devoid of that placid sweetness, which ever dwelt upon it. "I was indulging, sir, said she, and I hope not improperly, some natural affection, and taking, perhaps—my last leave, of my poor little babe, who holds my heart too fast—(false and weak heart as it is) rather too fast bound to this transitory scene! Pretty innocent; see how it smiles on its weeping mother! unconscious

scious yet of the bitterness of grief, and the sadness of tears. Sweet babe, I must leave thee; indeed I must leave; the father of heaven thinks fit, and his will be done! But oh, the parent, dear sir, the parent will feel: Surely this will not be deemed a deficiency in humble resignation!" I observed, that Christianity by no means opposes humanity; and that grace doth not destroy, it only regulates and refines our affections. "My soul, she went on, thankfully acquiesces in all the divine disposals, and I am satisfied, that whatever a God of love and wisdom ordains, must be best for his creatures. But when I look upon this dear innocent; when I consider the various evils of the world, and the prevalence of our corrupt passions; when I consider the peculiar inconveniencies of our sex, if deprived of maternal care and instruction; my heart throbs with sensible anxiety—and I wish—Oh father of love, pity and pardon me! Must I, ah must I leave this sweet harmless one to all the trials and difficulties of life! Oh my pretty babe, I must leave thee; but I shall intrust thee (and in that let me

take comfort) intrust thee to a tender father, and to the protection of a Saviour and a God, who careth for his little ones! Blessed Saviour—.” She was here overpowered by the strength of her affection; and falling into a fainting fit, from which we almost apprehended she would never recover, her husband and her parents were instantly called up; every effort was used to restore her; though grief suffered no one present to utter a syllable. The scene was the most profoundly awful I ever beheld!

At length she came to herself; and the first object she saw was her trembling mother bathed in tears, and holding her clay-cold hand! on the other side stood her father; at her feet knelt her anxious and distressed husband—around her several of us were placed, whose tears sufficiently witnessed our concern. She raised her languid Eyes; gazed wishfully at us—Then fixing them upon her mother, “Best and most beloved of parents, said she, farewell, farewell; God of his good mercy reward your tender care of me, and give us a meeting in the future world!—Oh my

my father, and are you too there? do not let me see your tears: support my poor mother, and remember you have a daughter gone before you to that place, where all sorrow ceases—But my husband—” She said no more; then threw her arms round his neck, and both mingled their tears together for some time. She sighed forth, “Best and most dear of men, let me thank you, sincerely thank you, for all the marks of your tender esteem. Be kind to my pretty babe; Oh! why should I say be kind? I know your goodness; but my sweet innocent; let her—” She stopt short—But soon went on, “I little expected all this pain at parting; this is dying; this is the bitterness of death—” My dear friends, she continued, addressing herself to all of us around her, “accept my best acknowledgments for all your kind offices to me; if you ever remember me when I am gone, remember, that my soul perfectly rejoiced in God’s dealing with me; and that however the weaker passions of nature may prevail; yet I am wholly resigned to his will, thankful

82 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

to him for all ; nay desirous to quit this world, that, I may see my Saviour, the Lord of love, who gave his life for me, and in whose merits I joyfully trust for salvation—I am on the brink of eternity, and now see clearly the importance of it—Remember, oh remember, that every thing in time is insignificant to the awful concerns of—” *Eternity*,—she would have said ; but her breath failed ; she fainted a second time ; and when all our labours to recover her, seemed just effectual, and she appeared returning to life, a deep sob alarmed us—and the lovely body was left untenanted by its immortal inhabitant !

NOW SHE IS NUMBER'D AMONG THE CHILDREN OF GOD, AND HER LOT IS AMONG THE SAINTS.

CHAP.

C H A P. VIII.

*Shou'd such a wretch to num'rous years arrive,
 It can be little worth his while to live:
 No honours, no regards his age attend,
 Companions fly; he ne'er could have a friend:
 His flatterers leave him, and with wild affright,
 He looks within, and shudders at the sight:
 When threat'ning death uplifts his pointed dart,
 With what impatience he applies to art,
 Life to prolong amidst disease and pains!
 ---Why this, if after it no sense remains?
 Why should he chuse these miseries to endure,
 If death could grant an everlasting cure?
 'Tis plain there's something whispers in his ear,
 (Tho' fain he'd hide it) he has much to fear.*

Jennyn's translation of Brown's poem on Immortality, &c.

AMONGST the various argu-
 ments of consolation on the loss of
 our friends, that which is drawn from
 the pleasing hope of a future meeting,
 in perfect felicity, doubtless is the most
 persuasive. Grief subsides, and sorrow
 softens into a tenderly pleasing remem-
 brance; when the soul is comforted
 with the happy expectation of one day
 Seeing again,—seeing never more to se-
 parate, those whom death hath reft from

84 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

our affectionate embraces, and removed a little before us, to our father's house. The transporting thought suffers us no longer to lament our loss; the flame of our friendship is still kept alive: and the anxious fear of disappointment on our parts, becomes an active principle of obedience and duty.—See in this view what we owe to our friends; and how careful we should be so to pass the short time of our pilgrimage here, that when we depart they may have rational grounds to believe, that our souls are with God; and that there they shall meet us, in the fullness of bliss!

What a comfort was this to the *parents* and *friends* of the amiable PULCHERIA; who, sensible of her constant attention to spiritual concerns, were well convinced, that her change was from mortality to glory: and therefore resigned her with cheerful thanksgiving to God; weeping over her, 'tis true, but weeping only the tears of gentle affection: and living always with a comfortable respect to that happy hour, when again they should meet, after melancholy absence,

sence, when again they should meet to be absent no more!

And shall it be?—Oh thou God of infinite grace, ever studious of thy creature's felicity, various in thy bounties, and infinite in loving-kindness.—It must be so! For whatever conduces most to our bliss, we have abundant evidence to conclude will be always thy decree!—It must be so! oh pleasing, balmy hope! And once again, ye best-lov'd parents, ye tender solicitous guardians of my youth, once again shall I behold you—but ah! not as once; not as wasted with sickness, and wearied with pain! I shall see you made like unto God; and saved from sorrow, from sin, and from death! Thou too, my LANCASTER, lov'd friend of my youth, with whom so often I have roved along the banks of favoured CAM, and enjoyed all the sweets of virtuous, unpolluted friendship; thou too shalt rejoice my longing sight! for never hast thou been wiped from the tables of my memory: still have I borne thee, as a seal, upon my heart; my first, my dearest, my disinterested friend! Happy, thrice happy thou, removed from this
bad

bad world, ignorant of its glozing arts, and fatal deceits! Happy, thrice happy thou, offered, in virtuous innocence and yet unhackneyed in the ways of evil men, an unpolluted flower, an early and sweet sacrifice to Heaven! — And shall we meet? Alas, too well I know where rests the only doubt! — But the blest hope shall animate my soul; still, still will I maintain the painful conflict. — Aid me, oh mighty Redeemer, in the fight: and through thy merits give me victory: give happy, speedy union with thyself, and with my friends!

But have we not living friends? And shall we in our regard for the *dead*, forget our duty to the *living*? — Forbid it Heaven! Nor let it be feared, where virtuous friendship reigns in the generous heart; that the love, which awakens every tender sentiment for the departed, will make us less anxious to communicate felicity to the surviving; less anxious so to live, that we may leave behind us the sweet odour of our memory, and the anxious desire to enjoy us again! Without this reciprocation of mutual endearments, what is life, and what is man!

had

Was

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 87

Was he formed for himself, or can he be blest in unsocial existence? Can he be contented—(nay then let him relinquish his claim to immortality) can he be contented to live without the love, to die without the tribute of friendly remembrance;—Can he be contented to live the despiser of his God, and to die the affliction of his friends, who can never think without horror of his future existence! How then can they dry up their tears? Oh wretched parents of the more wretched MISERABLE: my heart bleeds for you: I wonder not that ye refuse to be comforted!

Have we then any value for our friends, are they really dear to us, do we wish to remove every cause of anguish from their souls, and to wipe off every tear of distress from their eyes:—let this be a motive to influence our conduct, and to render us active in the discharge of every duty to God and to them; that so when we are summoned to that future and important world, they may close our eyes with peace, and say with infelt satisfaction, “Farewell, oh farewell, thou dearest, best-lov’d friend! Thy

Thy life, thy love, thy faith, leave us no room to doubt of thy felicity! Thou art happy! We mourn only for ourselves! Yet soon, very soon, we hope to meet thee hereafter. — Then farewell only for a while: we will ever bear thee in most faithful remembrance, and treading in the paths of thy virtues, will hope speedily to receive thy reward!

How desirable to leave this world, thus lamented and beloved! How much better than to drag out a contemptible existence through threescore and ten worthless years, and at length to drop into the grave, and there to rot, without one longing wish from one lamenting friend!

The contrast, perhaps, may strike us; let us view it in BUBULO: whose funeral obsequies I saw lately performed, with all the pomp and vain parade of ostentatious pride. Yet though carried to the silent tomb, with all this farce of show, no eye dropt a tear, and no heart heaved a sigh, when BUBULO ceased to breathe. Full threescore years and ten had BUBULO encumbered, with his heavy load, this sublunary world.

And it would be difficult to point out
any

any works of benevolence or religion, any works of real worth or humanity, which distinguished these seventy years! Fond of vile pelf, the earth-worm continually toiled to add to his heap; and though wealthy, and daily increasing in wealth, could never prevail upon himself to communicate to others, or to serve his nearest relations. Yet smooth were his words, and fair were his promises; and who, that knew him not, would have thought him other than an universal friend to mankind! the hours which were not devoted to gain, were consecrated to the service of his nice and enormous appetite, to devouring of *flesh*, and drinking of *wine*! He was, in this respect, a perfect animal: and who that saw him at a city feast ever thought him of a superior order? His faculties were almost entirely absorbed by this life of indulgence and gluttony: yet laden as he was, he could pretend to scoff at Religion, to deny the being, and to despise the revelation of God. — What rational man will think this strange?

He found a *female* willing to submit to the slavery of his dominion: she brought him

him three children, and happily was soon freed from her captivity. The eldest son continued a kind of superior servant to him, till his death, which he had long impatiently wished for, and heard of with joy. The younger, of a more sprightly disposition, unbiassed by principles, rushed headlong into the practice of all fashionable vices, and being unassisted by his father, committed some actions, which obliged him to secure himself by a voluntary banishment into the *West-Indies*. His daughter, though frequently asked in marriage, could never prevail upon him to forward her happy settlement in life:—he could not spare a fortune for her; she continued with him, therefore, in a state of discontent, and added not much to his felicity by her filial duty, as he was so averse to make any addition to her's by his parental regard. He saw his widowed *sister*, with many little orphans, surrounded with a variety of difficulties; and persuaded at length to undertake her affairs, embroiled them more and more; and in conclusion gave them up, because his *own business and concerns* would

would not allow him sufficient time to attend them. A long and wasting illness warned him of eternity : he would not receive the warning. He dreaded death, yet would not prepare to die. The jovial associates at the tavern and the club forsook and forgot him : his servants attended but cursed him : his children thought every day of his existence too long : the few dependants, which his money occasioned, ceased to regard him, and paid their respects to his son. BUBULO observed it, and it grieved him to the soul. He sent for more and more physicians : They wrote, shook their heads, and took their fees. All hope was gone. The minister of the parish was sent for. He found the almost lifeless wretch weeping, and lying along the ground : For he would be removed from bed ; had not strength to support himself ; fell down, and in a few moments died. Nobody wept, for nobody had cause to weep : The pride of the family gave him a pompous funeral — And he is forgotten !

Think

Think not, oh reader, the character of BUBULO exaggerated: He lived! and alas, too much it is to be feared, there are many BUBULO's living; whose example should inspire us with detestation of a *life*, which must certainly end in a *death* not less dreadful.

* * A friend of the writer of these Reflections is pleased to observe, "The Reflections on *Death* please me much. But don't you carry things rather too far, when you say, (in your eighth chapter) "'tis an indispensable duty to go to our parish church."—Was I to live in LONDON, I should rarely or ever go to my parish-church, if I had a stupid hum-drum minister. I LONG to live in LONDON, that I might hear *clever* men, &c.—I disapprove as much as you can do, running after Methodist preachers and *enthusiasts*: but should I not prefer a *Sherlock* at the *Temple*, if I lived in *Fleet-street*, to &c."

It is a misfortune, that when Gentlemen quote, they will not refer to the work, and observe the words—It is not said positively, in the place referred to, that, "it is an *indispensable duty*, &c."—The writer of the Reflections doth not deliver his own sentiments in that place; he only says, (see p. 93.) that the lady, whose character is given, PULCHERIA, esteemed it (for her part) an *indispensable duty*.
It

It would not follow from *thence*, that the writer of these Reflections thought it so: though being thus called upon by a *man of sense and learning*, (as his *friend* confessedly is,) he is now ready to declare, that he sincerely thinks there can be but very few exceptions. As to that of a SHERLOCK, it is too peculiar to be drawn into example.---But what would this Gentleman say of those, who, loose to all connections with their parish-minister, &c. would leave a SHERLOCK, nay and esteem him a *legal* preacher, *without unction*, &c. &c. to hear a *butcher*, or a *weaver*, a man without any learning, nay, a stranger to his own mother tongue?

C H A P. IX.

---Cut off even in the Blossoms of my Sin:

No Reckoning made, but sent to my Account,

With all my Imperfections on my Head!

O horrible---O horrible!---most horrible!

SHAKESPEAR.

IN the Liturgy of the church of England, we pray God to deliver us from *sudden death*; that is, as her best divines have always explained it, and as reason clearly understands it, from a death *sudden* and *unlooked for*, from a death

death instantaneous and unexpected; for which no provision has been made, which finds the soul utterly unprepared, and sends the unhappy mortal to eternity, with all his imperfections on his head! A death like this is doubtless to be deprecated, more than the wide-wasting pestilence, or the devouring sword.

On the other side, to the good man, to the soul conscious of its frail dependence here, and properly careful to secure its interests in the world beyond the grave; a sudden death is so far from an evil, that it appears rather a blessing; and in this view hath been earnestly wished by many men of exemplary piety.

Indeed, strictly speaking, there is no such thing as sudden death to us, *who, as soon as we are born, begin to draw to our end*; who breathe this subliminary air as temporary strangers, existing only awhile upon the bounty of providence; and assured that the moment will come shortly, may come instantly, when the Lord of life shall summon us into his tremendous presence! And as such is the condition of our being, we cannot properly call that stroke *sudden,*

den, to live in constant expectation of which is our highest wisdom and duty. Submission to the will of him who is as good as he is wise, is doubtless the best service which such imperfect creatures can pay in every particular; and therefore we act most wisely, when we submit the determination of this point to the father of mercies, and wait with resignation either for the momentary stroke, or the long and lingering trial, which dismisseth us from the stage of life.—This care only should be ours; well to act our parts; that the dismissal may be with a plaudit, with the approbation of our judge.

“ Yet, yet, oh father of unutterable love,—thou source of everlasting goodness——yet if the meanest of thy creatures might be allowed to make his request——if thou would’st deign to give him liberty of choice——suffer him not, oh do not suffer him *long* to languish on the bed of feeble disease, or excruciating pain; nor yet snatch him hence, by an *instantaneous* stroke, before he has looked his last farewell; and given the final affectionate adieu to all his heart-approved,

proved, his dearest, tenderest, and most valued friends ! He will not call their kind attendance round his bed, “ the afflicting parade of Death : ” He will rejoice in their sympathetic tenderness ; he will struggle to pour forth the voice of consolation and love ; he will point to the *hope* which upholds his soul, the shining *pole star* by which he steers ; and by which he trusts, his dearest friends shall steer into the joyful harbour of eternal rest ! The *hope*, the *star*, the *sun*, *Christ Jesus*, the conqueror of death, and the destruction of the grave ! ”

Such was the petition of the beloved URANIUS ; Heaven heard, and granted his prayer. This day he sickened ; the next summoned, and took leave of his friends ; perfect in his senses, he saw Death approaching, and saw him unappalled ! for he had led his life, in continual preparation for the awful event. — On the evening of the third day, he closed his eyes, and commended his spirit to the God, who gave it ; and almost without a groan, exchanged this mortal for an immortal state ! Happy URANIUS—so let me *die* ! or rather, let me

me say, "so let me *live*," and Death cannot fail to be blessed!

How different was the *death*, and ah how different was the *life*, of my neighbour AGRICOLA; whom oft, tho' in vain, I have endeavoured to wean from the world, and to shew the deceit and delusion of all earthly attachments! But alas he would not believe! AGRICOLA was a wealthy and laborious farmer; it might, strictly speaking, be said of him, that he *rose up early, and late took rest, and eat the bread of carefulness*. He prevented the morning's dawn, and called the *birds* to the field, or ere the rosy sun peeped over the misty mountains. The *flail*, early heard resounding in his barn, awakened the rest of the village, and was industry's summons to arise. His shepherds first drove their flocks a-field; and as the bleating multitude poured from their cotes, AGRICOLA stood by, and beheld with rapture the whiteness of their fleeces, and the strength of his sportive lambs. The neighbouring markets saw him always first to enter, and last to leave the scene of commerce and

F

advan-

advantage; his samples were always ready, and were always best.

Thus he pursued temporal things with unwearied application, and unremitted diligence: But for eternal things, AGRICOLA never once heeded, never once thought of them! What then? Did not AGRICOLA believe in God, in Providence, in Eternity! Oh yes, he believed all this; —but he had no time to think of such things! “*Hereafter*” was his word; it will be soon enough “*hereafter*.” What then? Did AGRICOLA forsake the weekly services of the church, and wholly relinquish the worship of God? Oh! by no means. AGRICOLA never or very rarely was absent from the divine service: He generally invited the curate of his little village—(a poor laborious man, like himself, who rode with all haste from parish to parish, and served *three* distant churches!) He generally invited him to a regale at his house on the sabbath; when the time would allow, the good man embraced it with thankfulness; they drank together in friendly sort; and behold, their conversation was of “*the oxen in the field*.”

AGRICOLA

AGRICOLA had sagacity enough to discern this impropriety in the conduct of the *man of God*: His *Rector's* rare appearance in the village, and ready acceptance of his tythes, gave him also no very favourable idea of religion. He judged these men *servants* of the Lord for the wages of the world; and apprehended all religion to be *lucrative* and *earthly*. He was desirous to believe it such; hence in the ale-house, at the markets, and in the little club of his village-neighbours, he frequently delivered his sentiments with freedom; and God and his *priests* were treated with no great respect.

AGRICOLA continued this course of life for some years; only as his money encreased, so encreased his heart's attachment to it; and (as the world was fond to say) his regard to probity diminished as his possessions were multiplied. The widows and the poor complained of his rapacity and extortion; the fields spoke his covetousness; for he encroached upon his neighbours lands, and the ancient boundaries were rendered disputable. The markets were

said to be forestalled, and his abundance became the source of oppression to the poorer farmer; he wished to stand alone; and beheld with a malevolent eye the flocks, the herds, and the crops of others.—He grew surly, proud, and insolent: vainly imagining that his wealth gave him importance, and a wretched right to tyrannize over his inferior neighbours. My connections with him afforded me opportunity often to remonstrate: he sometimes heard and promised fair: he heard more frequently with impatience, and would have spoken his dislike, if worldly motives had not compelled him to silence.

Happy had it been for him if he had heard, regarded, and been wise. Happy for him if he had trusted less to that "*hereafter*," which never came! For, as last summer he attended his reapers in the field, suddenly the heavens grew black with clouds; the sun withdrew his light; the air seemed to stagnate with intolerable fervor; the lightning flashed with unremitting fury; vast peals of thunder burst fearfully around; there was no place to fly unto; they were exposed

posed to all the terrors of the storm. AGRICOLA stood aghast—when behold, the thunder-bolt of omnipotence, (a sheet of living flame disclosing itself over his head,) in a moment struck him a blackened corpse to the ground!

Oh horrible! most horrible, thus to be sent to our final account! And shall not the death of AGRICOLA instruct us? Wilt thou, O Man, after such an admonition, persevere in *forgetfulness* of duty and *attachment* to the world!—Then certainly thou canst secure thyself from so deplorable an end!—No! thou canst not; thou canst not promise to thyself one future moment! Death lies concealed in every path we tread; and his stroke will ever be *sudden* and *dreadful* in proportion to the degree of our *forgetfulness* of that stroke, and our *attachment* to the world.

C H A P. X.

He who liveth in Pleasure, is dead while he liveth. 1 Tim. v. 6.

IT gives the *Author* of these *Reflections* singular pleasure to have the approbation of a *lady*, so justly admired for her good taste as *lady ****. He esteems it a particular favour that she condescends to make a request to him, which he most readily grants, as assured, that the letter which she desires him to admit, will not only be pleasing, but highly instructive to his serious readers. The death of Mr. NASH drew her thoughts to it, and therefore she is pleased to inform me, she copied it out for the benefit of the public: It was sent by a person of known worth and piety some years since to that *son of pleasure*: What effect it had, his future life, alas! did but too plainly shew!

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 103.

To RICHARD NASH, Esq; at Bath.

SIR,

THis comes from your sincere friend,
and one that has your best interest
deeply at heart: It comes on a design
altogether important, and of no less con-
sequence than your everlasting happi-
ness: So that it may justly challenge
your careful regard. It is not to up-
braid or reprove, much less to triumph
and insult over your misconduct: No;
'tis pure benevolence, 'tis disinterested
good-will prompts me to write; so that
I hope I shall not raise your resentment.
However, be the issue what it will, I
cannot bear to see you walk in the paths
which lead to death, without warning you
of your danger, without sounding in
your ears the awful admonition, "Re-
turn and live:—For why will you die?"
I beg of you to consider whether you do
not, in some measure, resemble those
unhappy children of ELLI, whom, though
they were famous in their generation,
and men of renown, yet vengeance suf-
fered not to live. For my part, I may

safely use the exhortation of the old Priest:—"Why do you such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. Nay, my brother, for it is no good report I hear: you make the Lord's people to transgress." I have long observed and pitied you; and a most melancholy spectacle I lately beheld, made me resolve to caution you, lest you also come into the same condemnation.

I was not long since called to visit a poor gentleman, ere while of the most robust body, and of the gayest temper I ever knew. But when I visited him, oh how was the glory departed from him! I found him no more that sprightly, and vivacious son of joy, which he used to be; but languishing, pining away, and withering under the chastising hand of God. His limbs feeble and trembling: His countenance forlorn and ghastly: And the little breath he had left, sobbed out in sorrowful sighs! His body hastening apace to the dust, to lodge in the silent grave, the land of darkness and desolation. His soul just going to God who gave it; preparing
itself

itself to wing away unto its long home; to enter upon an unchangeable and eternal state. When I was come up into his chamber, and had seated myself on his bed, he first cast a most wishful look upon me, and then began as well as he was able to speak——“ Oh that I had been wise, that I had known this, that I had considered my latter end. Ah! Mr.——, Death is knocking at my doors: In a few hours more I shall draw my last gasp; and then judgment, the tremendous judgment! How shall I appear, unprepared as I am, before the all-knowing and omnipotent God. How shall I endure the day of his coming!”

——When I mentioned, among many other things, that holy *Religion* which he had formerly so slightly esteemed: He replied (with a hasty eagerness) Oh that *Religion* is the only thing I now long for. I have not words to tell you how highly I value it. I would gladly part with all my estate, large as it is, or a world, to have lived in the practice of it. Now my benighted eyes are enlightened, I clearly discern the things that are excellent. What is there in the place whither

I am going, but God? or what is there to be desired on earth but Religion?"— But if this God should restore you to health, said I, think you that you should alter your former course? "I call heaven and earth to witness, said he, I would labour for holiness as I shall soon labour for life. As for riches and pleasures, and the applauses of men, I account them as dross and dung, no more to my happiness than the feathers that lie on the floor. Oh if the righteous judge would try me once more; if he would but reprieve and spare me a little longer;—in what a spirit would I spend the remainder of my days? I would know no other business, aim at no other end, than perfecting myself in holiness. Whatever contributed to that; every means of grace; every opportunity of spiritual improvement, should be dearer to me than ten thousands of gold and silver—But alas, why do I amuse myself with fond imaginations? The best resolutions are now insignificant, because they are too late. The day in which I should have worked is over and gone, and I see a sad, horrible night approaching,

ing, bringing with it the blackness of darkness for ever. Heretofore, (wo is me!) when God called, I refused; when he invited, I was one of them that made excuse. Now, therefore, I receive the reward of my deeds; fearfulness and trembling are come upon me: I smart, I am in sore anguish already; and yet this is but the beginning of sorrows! It doth not yet appear what I shall be—but sure I shall be ruined, undone, and destroyed with an everlasting destruction;”

This sad scene I saw with my eyes: these words, and many more equally affecting, I heard with my ears; and soon after attended the unhappy gentleman to his tomb. The poor breathless skeleton spoke in such an accent, and with so much earnestness, that I could not easily forget him or his words. And as I was musing upon this sorrowful subject, I remembered Mr. N—SH:—I remembered you, Sir—For I discerned too near an agreement and correspondence between yourself and the deceased. “They are alike, said I, in their ways, and what shall hinder them from being alike in their

end. The course of their actions was equally full of sin and folly, and why should not the period of them be equally full of horror and distress? I am grievously afraid for the survivor, lest as he lives the life, so he should die the death of this wretched man, and his latter end should be like his.

For this cause, therefore, I take my pen to advise—to admonish—nay, to request of you to repent while you have opportunity, if haply you may find grace and forgiveness. Yet a moment and you *may* die; yet a little while and you *must* die: And will you go down with infamy and despair to the grave, rather than depart in peace, and with hopes full of immortality?

But I must tell you, Sir, with the utmost freedom, that your present behaviour is not the way to reconcile yourself to God. You are so far from making atonement to offended justice, that you are aggravating the future account, and heaping up an increase of wrath against the day of wrath. For what say the scriptures? those books, which, at the consummation of all things, the ancient

tient of days shall open, and by which
 you shall be judged! What say those
 sacred volumes? They testify and de-
 clare to every soul of man, *That whose
 liveth in pleasure, is dead while he liveth.*
 So that while you roll on in a continued
 circle of sensual delights and vain enter-
 tainments, you are dead to all the pur-
 poses of Piety and Virtue. Think, Sir,
 I conjure you, think upon this, if you
 have any inclination to escape the fire
 that will never be quenched. Would
 you be rescued from the just vengeance
 of Almighty God? Would you be de-
 livered from weeping and wailing, and
 incessant gnashing of teeth? Sure you
 would! But be certain that will never
 be done by amusements, which at the
 best, are trifling and impertinent; and
 for that, if for no other reason, foolish
 and sinful. 'Tis by seriousness; 'tis by
 retirement and self-application you must
 accomplish this great and desirable de-
 liverance. You must not appear at the
 head of every silly diversion, but enter
 into your closet, and shut the door;
 commune with your own heart, and
 search out your spirit. The pride of
 life,

110 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

life, and all superfluity of naughtiness must be put away. You must make haste, and delay not the time to keep (and with your might too) all God's holy commandments. Always remembering, that mighty sinners must be mightily penitent; or else be mightily tormented.

Your example, and your projects, have been extremely *prejudicial*, I wish I could not say *fatal* and *destructive* to many: For this there is no amends but an alteration of your conduct, as signal and remarkable as your *person* and *name*.

If you do not by this method remedy in some degree the evils which you have sent abroad, and prevent the mischievous consequences which may ensue, —wretched will you be, yea wretched above men, to eternity. The blood of souls will be laid to your charge; God's jealousy, like a consuming flame, will smoke against you; as you yourself will see in that day, when the mountains shall quake, and the hills melt, and the earth be burnt up at his presence.

Once more then, I exhort you as a friend; I beseech you as a brother; I charge you as a messenger from the great
God,

God, in his own most solemn words: *Cast away from you your transgressions; make you a new heart and a new spirit; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.*

Perhaps you may be disposed to contemn this, and its serious purport; or to recommend it to your companions as a fit subject for raillery.—But let me tell you before-hand, that for this, as well as for other things, God will bring you into judgment. He sees me now I write: He will observe you while you read. He notes down my words in his book; he will also note down your consequent procedure. So that, not upon me, but upon your own self will the neglecting or despising my friendly admonitions turn. “If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it.”

With hearty good wishes for your welfare, I remain, Sir, your unknown friend, &c.—”

*** The Writer of the *Reflections* thought himself obliged to retain this letter, (which, however, he has taken the liberty to correct in a few places) not only out of respect to the Lady who communicated it, but because it

was published in the *Christian's Magazine*, in the regular course of the Reflections.—He finds it too in a life of Mr. NASH, lately published, and was therefore the rather inclined to retain it, as that biographer seems to think it too *severe*, and is inclined to palliate a life of utter dissipation, which certainly merited the severest strictures. No man living can have an higher regard for benevolence and humanity than the writer of these lines : But he thinks benevolence to the soul of a much higher nature than that to the body ; and would be far from leading those, who are treading the insidious paths of pleasure with too eager delight, into delusive and dangerous opinions, as if tenderness of heart, and acts of charity, could atone for every other deficiency. Dissipated and fond of pleasure as we are, little need is there to encourage men in so false a pursuit. It is hoped, therefore, that the writer of NASH's life, (who he is, I know not,) in a future edition, will strike out that offensive and hurtful passage, which every sincere christian must disapprove, wherein he asserts, “ That there was nothing *criminal* in his (NASH's) conduct :—that he was a *harmless* creature, whose greatest *vice* was *vanity*,—and that scarce a *single action* of his life, except one, deserves the *asperity* of *reproach*.—” And this is said of a man, who, with a heart of exquisite humanity, and which might have been moulded into the noblest form,—

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 113

was yet, through life, a gamester profest, and an encourager of illicit gaming!---a follower of pleasure all his days, and a perpetual dissipater!---and whose conversation was made up of trifling, of falshood, and of immorality!

In matters which concern the souls of men, let us be especially careful; for fatal, indeed, may it be to betray them into wrong opinions. In other respects we will unite to applaud Mr. NASH, and will readily join his panegyrists,—we will be thankful to him for the improvements he has made at *Bath*, by his means the most elegant and pleasing of all public places; and we will be thankful to the editor of his life, for the amusement and satisfaction we have received from so well-wrought and entertaining a performance.

C H A P.

C H A P. XI.

So mayst thou live, till like ripe fruit thou drop
 Into thy mother's lap, or be with ease
 Gather'd, not harshly pluck'd, for Death mature.
 This is old age; but then thou must outlive
 Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will change
 To wither'd, weak, and grey; thy senses then
 Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forego,
 To what thou hast: and for the air of youth
 Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign
 A melancholy damp of cold and dry,
 To weigh thy spirits down; and last, consume
 The balm of health. MILTON.

IN our two foregoing chapters, we have
 two very different and alarming cha-
 racters before us; each sufficient to shew
 us the vanity of this life, and to awaken
 in our souls an earnest attention to future
 concerns. The one, cut off by a sud-
 den blast from heaven in the full bloom
 of days, and the vigour of health: the
 other, dragging through a length of
 weary years a feeble existence*, to “the
 last scene of all,

* Mr. NASH died at Bath in February, 1761, aged 88. “The man was sunk long before, as one expresses it, (see the Public Ledger, No. 365) in the weakness and infirmities of exhausted nature.”

Which

*Which ends our strange, eventful history,
To second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing*.*

Old age is honourable, and hath its advantages. — But might I presume, Oh! thou almighty and all-wise, short-sighted as I am, and incapable at the best to distinguish my real good or evil, might I presume to judge, or to ask any thing of thee respecting my future state in this poor passing world, I would humbly say, “Suffer me not to bear the load of life when every faculty is benumb’d, when every power of enjoyment is past; when oblivion darkens the memory, and all the senses seem wearied and sealed up; when the power of being useful to mankind is totally removed, nay, when the power of pleasing is no more, and we become a burden even to our nearest friends.”

See the trembling, palsied HASSAN! unable to move; scarce able to utter intelligible sounds; weak in his sight; imperfect in hearing; oppress’d with pains; forgotten by all the world; forsaken

faken by all; and attended only by a distant relation, whom interest keeps with him, impatient for his departure, and anxious to possess his wealth. Yet though thus miserable, despised, forsaken, forgotten; HASSAN loves the world; clings faster to it, the more it shrinks from his embraces; detests the thoughts of death; and thinks and talks of nothing with satisfaction, but the delusive mammon of unrighteousness. Oh, what an old age is this! How wretched an issue of a long and useless life! Four-score years have been passed to no end, but the procuring of wealth. Four-score years are over; the wealth is procured; the man is about to die; and he hath neither child nor friend to inherit it! He hath no power to enjoy it; he is dead while he liveth: yet his affections are placed—not on things above,——but——ah sad reverse!——on things below. Can the world produce any object more pitiable or more contemptible than HASSAN?

Vigorous old age, the winter of an useful, virtuous life, is as much to be desired, as the contrary is to be deprecated.

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 117

cated. Crowned with victory over the inferior passions, girt round with useful and experimental knowledge, leaning on the staff of prudence, courage *, and resolution, the old man becomes a blessing to society; we rise up to him with reverence, and rejoice to do him honour.

Such is the hoary SOPHRON; we behold him with a degree of awe and veneration; we consult him with confidence; and to follow his advice is to act wisely and consistently. SOPHRON filled a very busy sphere of life, and maintained a high reputation for integrity, prudence, and piety. He retreat-

* Bishop HALL gives us an instance of courage in an old plain man in the country: some thieves broke into his solitary dwelling, taking advantage of the absence of his family, and finding him sitting alone, by his fire-side, they fell violently upon him: when one of them fixing his dagger to the old man's heart, swore that he would presently kill him, if he did not instantly deliver to them that money which they knew he had lately received. The old man, looking boldly into the face of the villain, replied with an undaunted courage; "Nay, if I were killed by thee, I have lived long enough; but I tell thee, son, unless thou mend thy manners, thou wilt never live to see half my days."

ed

ed in proper season from the stage, and now dedicates his time to the great business of self-recollection. Yet is he no absolute hermit nor recluse; nor does he so live to himself as to forget the concerns of others; mild and affable, he delights in the conversation of his friends, and pleasingly instructs, while scarce seeming to instruct; benevolent and humane, he listens to the voice of affliction, and is always the ready friend of the poor and the oppressed. Happy SOPHRON! he has not lived in vain; his youth was active; his old age is healthful, placid, and peaceable. Resigned to the Sovereign Disposer's will, he waits contentedly for his approaching change, and looks with joy to his journey's end; looks with joy to that harbour, wherein his weather-beaten vessel must shortly cast anchor! when his youth shall be renewed as the eagle's, and he shall live with God in perfect fruition for ever.

If men will not look forward, nor prepare for *eternity*, we cannot expect they should prepare for *old age*; but surely, if we wish or desire to live long, — and it is to be feared this is too much
the

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 119

the wish of human hearts, — we should endeavour to provide for the winter of life, by laying up such a store of true wisdom and health, as may render the close comfortable; or at least soften the many unavoidable difficulties of age.

Intemperance will for the general prevent our long continuance here below*; it will certainly treasure for us many pains and evils, if we are allowed a longer existence: Vice and immorality will render our old age despicable to others and afflicting to ourselves; and make us the more uneasy to quit the stage of life, as we draw nearer the dire necessity. So that the grand rule to attain a happy old age, as well as a happy death, is to “live well:” is to live, as becometh those who bear the solemn

* *Old Adam*, the faithful servant, in *Shakspeare*, speaks thus:

Tho' I look old, yet I am strong and lusty,
For in my youth I never did apply
Hot and rebellious liquors in my blood;
Nor did I with unbashful forehead woo
The means of weakness and debility:
Therefore my age is as a lusty winter,
Frosty, but kindly.---

name

name of *Christians*, and profess the sacred name of *Christ*.

Uncertain as is the tenure of human life, this rule one would conceive should be universally regarded. For how few, how very few of the myriads of mortals, who tread this faithless earth, arrive at old age, or see the present boundary of human life, the *seventieth year*! What numbers before that age are consigned to a state eternal and unalterable! alarming thought!—And canst thou, oh reader, promise thyself this length of days! Knowest thou how long thy line shall run: knowest thou, when the mighty master shall call, and thou must appear before his impartial tribunal? Alas, human fate is mantled in thick darkness! But eternity—who, like *AGRICOLA*, would be utterly unprepared, since the call may come instantly; and then how terrible the consequences?

But *AGRICOLA*'s fate was peculiar. —So thought his neighbour *HAUSTULUS*. He saw the singed corpse of *AGRICOLA* borne from the field; shook his head, declared the stroke a
judg.

judgment from heaven, and enlarged greatly on the demerits of the deceased:—Yet he forget himself. HAUSTULUS was the pride of the village where he lived: young, healthful, robust: the maidens beheld him with pleasure; the young men heard of his perfections with envy. A lively good-nature recommended him universally; and relying on the strength of his constitution, he was the first and last at every merriment, at every wake, at every scene of rural pleasantry and joy. Drinking too deep at one of these, and staying too late from home, he caught a cold; a violent fever ensued: he became delirious; all hopes in a few days were lost; and he, who had never employed one serious hour about his soul, thus plunged,—ah hapless improvident—in to a state everlasting!—Was his fate peculiar; was *his* death *sudden*?—'Tis a death; 'tis a fate every day exemplified.—And would you choose to share such a fate; to die such a death? Surely no: then be careful not to lead such a life. For there are innumerable outlets from this present scene: lightnings

G

and

122 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

and fevers are not the only instruments in the hand of God: the meanest and most inconsiderable agent is all-sufficient with him to stop the throbbing heart; and to draw the veil of death over the closing eyes.

C H A P. XII.

*Woe then apart, (if woe apart can be
From mortal man) and fortune at our nod;
The gay, rich, great, triumphant, and august,
What are they? the most happy (strange to say!)
Convince me most of human misery.* YOUNG.

THOUGH *Death* levels all distinctions, and pays no more deference to the *Crown*, than to the unnoticed head of the meanest peasant; yet the *great* seem willing to preserve, even in death, that distinction which they have shared in life; and therefore refuse to mix their social dust with common and inferior clay! There may be a propriety in this; subordination is absolutely necessary: and it may be decent, that they who have been elevated in life, should at the close of it, still keep up their due dignity.

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 123

nity. But this will not prevent us from meditating in the *vault* of the *Nobles*; where surely we shall find ample matter for contemplation.

By the side of the church, where first I was led into these *Reflections*, such a vault is found. Let me descend into the solemn and sacred recess! How awful! as I tread slowly down the stone steps, which lead into it, a melancholy murmur seems to *eccho* through the silent mansion; the moon just throws in a faint light, sufficient for me to discern the contents, (though indeed no stranger to them) and all my soul thrills with anxious horror!—Whence this strange, this uncommon dread upon us, when conversing with the deceased? Helpless dust and ashes as they are, we know they cannot harm or injure us. Nay, and were it possible for any of them to appear to us, surely it would be most delightful and most acceptable to view them, and to hear from them some of the wonders of that world,—— which is at once so interesting, and so much unknown!

G 2

But

124 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

*But ah!—no notices they give,
Nor tell us where, nor how they live:
Though conscious while with us below,
How much themselves desir'd to know!
As if bound up by solemn fate
To keep this secret of their state;
To tell their joys or pains to none,
That man might live by faith alone.*

Oh, come hither, ye sons of ambition, ye children of pride; descend a while from the lofty summit whereon you stand, and look disdain on all beneath you: oh come, and pass a few silent minutes with me in this lonely vault, which boasts the most noble inhabitants; and elation will no more dwell in your eye, or vanity rise in your hearts.

Here are the great and the gay; the young and the brilliant; the honourable and the lovely, placed in no mean order or elegance together. Their coffins are decorated with velvet and with silver; but ah their contents are only like vulgar dust. — There lies the noble ALTAMONT: no wonder the remembrance of him first strikes every soul which descends into this vault, and was no stranger to his character. An able
writer

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 125

writer * hath given us a striking account of his last moments : let us first recollect this, and then make our reflections upon it.

“ I am about to represent to you, says he, the last hours of a person of *high birth, and high spirit; of great parts, and strong passions, every way accomplished, not least in iniquity.* His unkind treatment was the death of a most amiable wife; and his great extravagance, in effect, disinherited his only child.

The sad evening before the death of that noble youth, I was with him. No one was there, but his physician, and an intimate whom he loved, and whom he had ruined. At my coming in, he said :

“ You, and the physician, are come too late.—I have neither life, nor hope. You both aim at miracles.—You would raise the dead.”

Heaven, I said, was merciful.

“ Or I could not have been thus guilty. What has it not done to *bless* and to save me ? —I have been too strong

G 3

for

* Dr. Young, in his *Centaur* not *Fabulous*.

126 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

for omnipotence! I have plucked down ruin."

I said, the blessed Redeemer.

"Hold! hold! you wound me! That is the rock on which I split.—I denied his name."

Refusing to hear any thing from me, or to take any thing from the physician, he lay silent, as far as sudden darts of pain would permit, till the clock struck. Then with vehemence,

"Oh time! time! It is fit thou should'st thus strike thy murderer to the heart.—How art thou fled for ever!—A month!—Oh for a single week! I ask not for years. Though an age were too little for the much I have to do."

On my saying, we could not do too much: that heaven was a blessed place—

"So much the worse. 'Tis lost! 'Tis lost!—Heaven is to me the severest part of hell!"

Soon after I proposed prayer.

"Pray you that can; I never prayed, I cannot pray.—Nor need I. Is not heaven on my side already. It closes with my conscience. Its severest strokes but second my own."

His

His friend being much touched even to tears, at this, (who could forbear? I could not) with a most affectionate look, he said :

“ Keep those tears for thyself. I have undone thee.—Dost weep for me? That’s cruel. What can pain me more.”

Here his friend, too much affected, would have left him.

“ No, stay. Thou still may’st *hope*;—therefore hear me. How madly have I talked? How madly hast thou listened and believed? But look on my present state, as a full answer to thee, and to myself. This body is all weakness and pain; but my soul, as if stung up by torment to greater strength and spirit, is full powerful to reason; full mighty to suffer. And that, which thus triumphs within the jaws of mortality, is doubtless, *immortal*. And as for a *deity*, nothing less than an Almighty could inflict what I feel.”

I was about to congratulate this passive, involuntary confessor, on his asserting the two prime articles of his creed, extorted by the rack of nature; when he thus, very passionately :

“No, no! let me speak on. I have not long to speak — My much-injured friend! my soul, as my body, lies in ruins; in scattered fragments of broken thought. Remorse for the past throws my thought on the future. Worse dread of the future, strikes it back on the past. I turn and turn, and find no ray.—Didst thou feel half the mountain that is on me, thou would’st struggle with the martyr for his stake; and bless heaven for the flames;—That is not an everlasting flame; that is not an unquenchable fire.”

How were we struck? yet soon after, still more. With what eye of distraction, what a face of despair, he cried out:

“My principles have poisoned my friend; my extravagance has beggared my boy; my unkindness has murdered my wife!—And is there another hell?—Oh! thou blasphemed, yet most indulgent Lord God! Hell itself is a refuge, if it hides me from thy frown.”

Soon after his understanding failed. His terrified imagination uttered horrors not to be repeated, or ever forgot.
And

And ere the sun (which I hope has seen few like him) arose, the gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched ALTAMONT expired.

C H A P. XIII.

*Adorned with all that earth or heav'n could give
To make her amiable.*—MILTON.

HOW doubly dreadful is *Death*, when it hurries away an affrighted and unprepared soul from all the splendor and pomp of earthly greatness, from noble mansions; elegant gardens; beautiful and extensive parks; numerous attendants; large possessions; and all the bright circle of towering grandeur! “And must I leave these?—Curse upon my fate,—must I leave all these?” said the noble PUBLIO, as stretched upon the bed of acute disease, he lay struggling with his fate, like a wild bull in the net; impatient and restless under the hand of Omnipotence, as the untamed lion, in the toils of the *Lybian* hunter. Yes, PUBLIO, thou must leave all these; and, proud and vain as thou hast been of thy

130 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

titles and honours; as much elevated as thou hast thought thyself above thy fellow mortals, thou must now at length experience that Death levels all distinctions, and strikes at thee with as cruel unconcern, as he strikes at the meanest peasant who toils in the spacious fields. Why will men forget this obvious truth? surely if the noble would bear it in mind, it would be a powerful check against every motion of pride, and would instantly crush the least tumor of elation.

If we look to this world only, how superior are the advantages which the great and wealthy enjoy; how infinitely superior to those which the poor and mean can attain? But if we look beyond the present scene, nay, if we look only to the parting moment, how great advantages have the poor over the wealthy? Poverty denies to men the enjoyment of almost every thing which the rich call convenient and comfortable; much more of what they call elegant and pleasurable. But poverty disengages the affections from this transitory scene, and depriving men of the enjoyment, renders them indifferent to the con-

continuance of life. He who has nothing to leave behind him, must be supposed to quit the stage with infinitely less regret, than he who is surrounded with every thing that can elevate the desires, or delight the heart of man. Now, if we were steady to our Christian principles, and fixed in our pursuits of the blessings of eternity, doubtless, in this view, poverty would be very far from being ever esteemed an evil.

But let us not conceal the truth: there is often more of envy and chagrine in our strictures on wealth and greatness, than real contempt of these idols, than true Christian renunciation of them. And it is to be feared, that our remarks respecting their possessors, are frequently stretched beyond the line of truth. It is a point of which long experience and close observation have left me no room to doubt, that the *great* are not the *happy*: I mean, that sincere felicity, and an exalted state, have no natural and necessary connection. Yet am I equally satisfied that the *poor* are not the *happy*. If the disturbing and higher passions molest the repose of the former, the

132 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

chagrining and vexatious passions sufficiently ruffle the quiet of the latter. In great goodness and condescension to his creatures, the all-wise disposer of things hath made happiness peculiar to no state, and attainable in all. It is a plant which will thrive in every soil, though some may be more kindly to it than others : I have seen it blooming in all the verdure of the most flourishing palm tree : In the splendid palace of the noble : I have seen it fresh, beautiful, and fragrant, in the lowly dwelling of the peaceful and contented cottager. For the true Christian is the happy man ; and he who is indeed a Christian, will find peace and joy, whether in the cottage or the palace.

What could have deprived the gay, the young, the noble, ingenious, and most accomplished ALTAMONT, of happiness superlatively pleasing ; had he but known and practised that divine religion, whose excellence is sufficiently marked by the name of him who revealed it,—*the eternal son of God* ? Every earthly bliss crowded around the noble young man, sedulous to present themselves, and anxious to offer their sweets to his hand.

hand. Elegant mansions, highly furnished with all that art could bestow, were ready provided for him; parks beautified with the finest lawns, and most extensive prospects stretched themselves around him; ample estates were in his possession, sufficient to supply every necessity, and sufficient for the calls of magnificence, liberality, and charity; and Heaven had blessed him with a mind capacious of the largest enjoyments; with sense equal to the most elegant refinements. Happy peculiarity——Heaven had blessed him too with a bride, whose virtuous endearments were themselves sufficient to have constituted perfect bliss; and in whose love scarce a man exists, who would not have thought himself amply crowned with his heart's full content!

Ah wretched ALTAMONT,—the want of that christian virtue, which alone will felicitate, robbed thee of the enjoyment of all these blessings, and brought thee in early youth to a despairing death; thy soul undone, thy fortune ruined, thy wife broken-hearted, and thy orphans beggared! ah vain and worthless nobility!

134 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

lity ! what availed to thy miserable remains, the nodding plumes and the escutcheon'd hearse, with all the pomp of funeral solemnity ! Here thou liest mouldering in the velvet-clad coffin : and I, so much beneath thee in station, can weep thy sad fate, and commiserate thee, thou fallen son of greatness !

Oh ye nobles of the earth, consider and be wise. Nobility, without virtue, is but a polished shaft, more quick and keen to destroy ; adorned with Christian faith, 'tis a coronet of gold, graceful and honourable to the brow ; it will dignify you in time, and add honour to your greatest honours in eternity.

So thought the incomparable Lady, whose sad relics I view with joy, and am transported to find in this doleful vault an inscription like the following, over her honoured remains. Let us peruse it, and leave it to our reader's reflections.

“ Here rests the body of MARY, Countess of—, &c.—who departed this life, &c. whom it were unpardonable to lay down in silence, and of whom 'tis difficult to speak with justice. For her just character will look like flattery, and

and the least abatement of it is an injury to her memory.

In every condition of life she was a pattern to her sex; appeared mistress of those peculiar qualities, which were requisite to conduct her through it with honour, and never failed to exert them in their proper seasons, to the utmost advantage.

She was modest without affectation, easy without levity, and reserved without pride. Knew how to stoop without sinking, and to gain people's affections without lessening their regard.

She was careful without anxiety, frugal without parsimony; not at all fond of the superfluous trappings of greatness, yet abridged herself of nothing which her quality required.

She was a faithful member of the Church of England.

Her piety was exemplary, her charity universal.

She found herself a widow in the beginning of her life, when the temptations of honour, beauty, youth, and pleasure, were in their full strength; yet she made them all give way to the interest

136 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH

terest of her family, and betook herself entirely to the matron's part.

The education of her children engrossed all her care; no charge was spared in the cultivation of their minds, nor any pains in the improvement of their fortunes.

In a word, she was truly wise;—truly honourable,—and truly good.

More can scarce be said; and yet he who said this, knew her well, and is well assured, that he has said nothing which either veracity or modesty should oblige him to suppress.*

C H A P. XIV.

Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?

What tho' we wade in wealth, or soar in fame?

Earth's highest station ends in, "Here he lies."

And "Dust to dust," concludes her noblest song.

YOUNG.

FROM the vault, where rest the precious remains of the great and

* The Reader may be assured of the strict truth of what is here delivered, as this character was penned by that excellent prelate Dr. Hough, formerly Bishop of Worcester.

noble,

noble, I ascended into the Church, and was immediately led to that part of the sacred edifice, which is dedicated to the memory of these illustrious personages! What superb monuments! what elaborate decorations! what pompous inscriptions! what high-sounding epitaphs! one would imagine from a perusal of these, that all the sons and daughters of this noble house, like those mentioned in another sacred place, were valiant and virtuous! but alas, even *Tombs* are taught to flatter and to lye.

How strong is the desire of pre-eminence in the human breast: we wish to preserve it even in death. In some respects it may be well to preserve it: But what vanity can be so truly contemptible, as that which assigns a large sum of money to the erecting a splendid monument, serving to perpetuate only the rector's folly and pride! let the truly virtuous and the truly good, the friends to society, and the ornaments of religion, be distinguished in death: for the rest, whatever titles they bear, or honours they boast, they are a mere num-

138 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

ber only,—let them be consigned to oblivion and dust!

What a foppery and false taste discovers itself in some of these fantastic monuments before me, the emblems of which it is more difficult to decypher, than the darkest shades of an allegoric poem! what absurdity and prophane-ness glare in others! methinks I am transported, by some invisible power, while I gaze from a Christian church into one of the heathen temples; for their deities crowd around me, sculptured with all the pride of art, while I can discern a *Medallion* only of *him* to whose memory the monument is consecrated! it looks as if the noble dead had renounced their dependance upon Christ and his Gospel; and returned to the worship of those heathen divinities, into whose hands they seem to commend their fame.

But while I turn away with disgust from these fine but misapplied efforts of art: That elegantly-simple monument strikes and delights me. It is the statue of the late Duke of * * * *; It is finished in the highest taste; it af-fords

fords the most exact resemblance of his person: the posture is the most natural and easy; proper for the place, serious and contemplative: It is raised on a plain but beautiful pedestal; there are no fantastic decorations; the inscription contains nothing more than the name of this worthy nobleman, the date of his birth and death, and the detail of his illustrious issue. There needs no more; his virtues live in the faithful memory of his friends and of his country; and time itself cannot obliterate the impression, which his beneficence hath made on the hearts of mankind. But could time efface these, should they be universally forgotten; yet will they be had in everlasting remembrance before God, the eternal rewarder of those who live to do good; who make the blessings vouchsafed to them by providence, the exalted means of felicity to others. — Such actions in life, will smooth the rough brow of death, and render the departure from honours and opulence not only easy, but joyful!

Methinks, as I stand contemplating this animated *statue*, I can fancy its noble

ble original before me, as I have often seen him, and imagine I hear him, thus addressing me: "See the end of human grandeur, and learn to think nothing great in mortality! nothing can be truly great which is uncertain; nothing truly good which must shortly have an end. Ere while I flourished in all the verdure which human existence can boast. High in birth, high in honours, dignified with the royal favour, abounding in wealth, and of consequence courted and flattered by the universal voice of men! In this elevated state I forgot not myself: I remembered that I was a man, that I was to give an account to a superior tribunal, and that my punishment or reward would be in proportion to the trust reposed in me. When therefore the solemn summons came, when I heard the alarming voice, — "Thou must die!" — I was not confounded, tho' impress'd with awe, commending myself to the father of mercies, I resigned his earthly favours with complacence and thankfulness, in happy hope of a future and better state!

Had

Had my conduct been the reverse of this, what should I have gained—what should I not have lost! for my pomp and power could not have arrested the stroke of death, which would have pierced my heart with agony inexpressible, as separating me from all things desirable below, and removing me to a world where I had neither hope nor desire! Then might this *melancholy statue* well stand as a representative of my afflicted soul! revolving with sorrow the past enjoyments, and looking with a wishful eye to that mansion, and that lovely park, which once I ranged with such pleasure, then for ever denied to my hapless feet!

—Mine was a better choice: the remembrance of *death* taught me wisdom; for they who remember death, will assuredly be wise."

This is an important truth: The abuse of life proceeds from the forgetfulness of death; when men fix their standards upon earth, and vainly propose this transitory scene as the end of their being, and the object of their love, what errors and evils are the consequence; what

what fearful disappointments here, and what horrid punishment hereafter!—

This was the case with the famous Cardinal of the noble house of BEAUFORT, who, much unlike that amiable nobleman, whose character we have been considering, remembered not that wealth and greatness were insignificant and unavailing to stay the hand of death; and that, gain'd by indirectness, they prove, in conclusion, a never-dying worm to the distracted conscience. When therefore, as history informs us, he was arrested in mid career, and all the terrors of death were marshalled in horrid array before him, thus he complained, and thus vented his afflicted soul to his friends weeping around *—"And must I then die? will not all my riches save me? I could purchase the kingdom if that would prolong my life. What! is there no bribing of death? when my nephew the Duke of BEDFORD died, I thought my happiness and my authority greatly increased; but the Duke of GLOUCESTER's death raised me in fancy to a level with kings; and I thought of

* See Harpsfield's History.

nothing

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 143

nothing but accumulating still greater wealth to purchase at length the triple crown! alas! how are my hopes disappointed! wherefore, O my friends, let me earnestly beseech you to pray for me, and recommend my departing soul to God *."

Ah

* Cardinal Beaufort was of royal extraction; he was the son of *John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster*, by his third wife *Catherine Swinford*: he was commonly called, *the rich Cardinal of Winchester*: He died in 1447. *Shakespeare*, who generally preserves historical truth very exactly, in his second part of *Henry the VIth*, hath given us in lively colours, a description of the Cardinal's death, with which, I am persuaded, my readers will be pleased, and therefore I subjoin it here:

Scene the Cardinal's Bed Chamber.

Enter King Henry, Salisbury, and Warwick, to the Cardinal in Bed.

K. H. How fares, my lord? speak Beaufort to thy sovereign?

Card. If thou beest death, I'll give thee England's treasure,

Enough to purchase such another island,
So thou wilt let me live and feel no pain.

K. H. Ah! what a sign it is of evil life,
Where death's approach is seen so terrible!

War. Beaufort, it is thy sovereign speaks to thee.

Card.

144 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

Oh, what an end was this! what a-
 vailed it this unhappy great man, that
 sacrificing to his ambition some of the
 most sacred duties of humanity, he died

Card. Bring me unto my trial when you will.
 Dy'd he * not in his bed? where should he die?
 Can I make men live whether they will or no?
 Oh torture me no more, I will confess—
 Alive again? then shew me where he is:
 I'll give a thousand pound to look upon him.---
 He hath no eyes, the dust hath blinded them:
 Comb down his hair: look, look; it stands upright
 Like lime twigs set to catch my winged soul.
 Give me some drink, and bid th' apothecary
 Bring the strong poison that I bought of him.

K. H. O thou eternal mover of the heavens,
 Look with a gentle eye upon this wretch!
 Oh beat away the busy meddling fiend
 That lays strong siege upon this wretch's soul,
 And from his bosom purge this black despair.

War. See how the pangs of death do make him
 grin.

Sal. Disturb him not, let him pass peaceably.

K. H. Peace to his soul, if God's good pleasure
 be!

Lord-cardinal, if thou think'st on Heaven's bliss,
 Lift up thy hand, make signal of thy hope,
 --He dies and makes no sign,--O God forgive him.

War. So bad a death argues a monstrous life.

K. H. Forbear to judge, for we are sinners all.
 Close up his eyes, and draw the curtains round,
 And let us all to meditation.---

* Meaning the Duke of Gloucester, of whose murder he
 was suspected.

possessed

possessed of a sum, superior to what, perhaps, any subject before him had possessed! What availed it, that amidst the terrors of death he consigned large sums to charitable offices! and least of all, what could avail the ten thousand masses which he ordered to be said for his soul! Heaven is not to be purchased with gold, nor the favour of God to be bought with money! Our redemption was not perfected by such corruptible things, but by the precious blood of *Christ*, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot! and he who after an evil life, thinks to conciliate the regard of the most high by donations and masses, dies in a mistake as gross and fatal as that wherein he lived. Indeed to the honour of the Protestant church we must observe, that this most destructive of all errors is seldom found within her pale, at least, in comparison with its frequency in the Romish church; where the religious orders are led to deceive even the souls of dying men, for the sake of accumulating wealth to their own societies! shocking and dreadful! how contrary to the tenor of that Gospel, by which we are as-

25 H fured,

246 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

lured, that the truly humbled heart, and penitent desire, the lively faith, and undissembled sorrow can alone recommend us to the father, through the merits and intercession of the only-begotten son!

Before I conclude this chapter, let me point out to my reader a noble penitent of the Protestant communion, as a contrast to this Cardinal of the church of Rome: the Earl of Rochester, I mean; whose life was defiled with every vice, but whose death was distinguished by the most exemplary repentance—a repentance not shewn by merely external gifts, and the appointment of repeated masses for his soul; but by inward contrition and real sorrow for the past—by a desire to undo all the evil he had done, and to stop the current of all the mischief which unhappily owed its source to him;—by an unfeigned application to the only Redeemer, and a fixed resolution to amend his life (if that life should be spared) and to be as exemplary in holiness, as he had been infamous in the practice of vice.—This is true repentance; and such a penitent Christ will assuredly redeem, as well from the guilt

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 147

as from the defilement of all his former iniquities.

C H A P. XV.

*Take physic, pomp:
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou may'st shake the superfluous to them,
And shew the Heavens more just.* Shakespeare.

HIGH in health, and recumbent on the downy breast of prosperity and indulgence, *Securus* rejects our reflections with disdain, and will not, cannot bear to hear of *Death*, the cruel spoiler of all his circling comforts! "Away with the melancholy strain," he cries; I cannot endure the voice of this gloomy contemplative. Let him not approach to disturb my repose, nor like the hoarse and ill-boding raven, croak his fatal admonitions in my ears." Ah mistaken mortal, what troubles art thou treasuring up for a future moment! pity him Heaven, who has no pity for himself!—We will leave him then, tho' with sorrow and compassionate regret: And intreat thy attendance, Oh serious

148 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

and Christian Reader, (who art not afraid to view these mournful but instructive scenes) to the sick, the dying bed of the *poor* man, now that we have visited together the superb vault of the *noble*. If thou art *rich*, perhaps thou hast never been called to so sad a scene, and the sight of it will teach thee content: If thou art *poor*, it will affect thy heart, and lead thee to a serious concern for futurity; that both temporal and eternal evils may not be thy deplorable lot!

Come then, and let me lead thee up these narrow and miserable stairs to the wretched apartment, whither I was ere while led, and where the poor man lies languishing on the bed of emaciating disease! Seeest thou this dismal dwelling, foul, offensive, squallid!

Hear, the wind whistles through the shatter'd casement, ill defended by vile rags and darkening paper, sure mark of penury and distress.

Seeest thou that wretched object, pale and meagre, with haggard staring eyes, and beard unshaven, stretched upon those stocks, with not a curtain round him,
and
H

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 149

and with scarce a cover to conceal his wasted body.

Turn round and view upon the floor another miserable heap of tatters. It is the bed of two poor children of this afflicted sufferer! and this, this place of woe, is the only habitation which receives and hides the heads of these children, with their mother and himself! That woman, bathed in tears, and clothed in the garments of poverty, is the wife, is the mother of these children, that husband——hapless wife, and still more hapless mother!

But though narrow this apartment, though offensive and foul, it would well suffice, and be but little complained of, did not want, cruel want here too fix her abode; could the mother supply the importunate demands of her hungry children, or alleviate the pains and sufferings of her oppressed husband. But alas! the parish withholds relief from aliens to its rights; and how shall the charity of the beneficent find out in their populous, but obscure retreats, the stranger and unknown!

H 3

Nay

Nay but even poverty itself, with all its dire necessities, might be borne;—well, very well, if dependance upon God was found in the heart; if heavenly hope dwelt in the breast; if there was any prospect of an happy issue, when all these mournful trials are overpast, and the soul safely landed on a future and fortunate shore! but for this we enquire in vain; from the want of it proceeds far the greater part of these evils. When I came to talk with EGNO, (so call we this *poor* man) concerning his soul, his faith, his hope, and future expectations; he fixed his eyes upon me with the most unutterable concern, and elevating his emaciated hand, sighed, “Alas! alas! Sir, sure I shall recover!” “But if you should not, as God knows there appears but little probability—what then? what says your conscience, and in what is your trust?” “I cannot tell, he replied, I have not been so good as I ought: but if I live, I will endeavour to be better!” I turned to his wife, to ask somewhat of his manner of life; and to know whether during his long illness (for he had long been

been declining) he had ever shewn any concern for his soul, or whether she had ever read to him for his instruction? — Weak and wretched as he was, he could reply, with abundant acrimony, “*She instruct me?—No, she had better first instruct herself; she wants it most!*” What greater shock could an humane heart feel, than to perceive a fierce altercation likely to ensue between two persons so mutually and so deeply distressed! I interposed with some authority; and endeavoured with all my power to set forth the dread terrors of futurity before the eyes of this unawakened sinner, just, just about to launch—Oh horrible—into its irredeemable gulf!

He heard me with attention, and I perceived at length a tear stealing into his sunken eyes, “*I have been miserable, said the poor unhappy object, all the days of my life; and now I perceive that I must be miserable through all eternity too!*” Upon hearing this, we could none of us refrain from tears. Oh who could refrain, to see a fellow-creature lying in this exquisite distress,

soul and body equally estranged from comfort and ease——Oh who could refrain, to see one for whom *Christ* died, thus about to perish, ignorant and hopeless, in a land where the glad tidings of this Saviour are so constantly and universally preached.

Moved with compassion, I endeavoured to offer some consolation—the utmost which I *dared* to offer: For alas! how can the ministers of *Christ* exceed their commission; how speak peace to those with whom there is no peace?——But my offers were unavailing; he told me, “he had led a wicked and a careless life, and now he found that the end of it was sorrow and despair.” After every argument to arouse and to console, I joined in prayer with him and his wretched household; and exhorting him to earnest prayer, and fervent supplication for himself to the father of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, I left them, designing on the morrow to renew my visit.

But from this melancholy office I was prevented by his wife, who came in the morning to inform me that he expired in the night; expired regardless, as it seemed,

seemed, of all things, utterly stupid, senseless, and unheeding.

And thus too often it happens, that the minister is sent for when the soul is at the last gasp, when hope is given up, and when all our endeavours, alas! are inefficacious, as pouring water in a sieve. During almost a twelvemonth's illness, EGENO thought not of God, of repentance, of death. Just when the lamp of life was going out, just when the trembling soul fluttered on the verge of eternity, the alarm was given, and all was confusion, disorder, and dismay. His whole life was a scene of care, of toil, of discontent, and sin. Neglectful, wholly neglectful of religion, his sabbaths were passed in trifling or drunkenness; the scanty pittance he gained by his labour, was too commonly condemned, before it was earned; and his wife and children bewailed in hunger and want, their frequent disappointment of his wages. Hence arose brawls and contentions at home; which rendered the little wretched lodging still more wretched. As no surplus was saved, his own, and the cloathing of his family was seldom superior to rags; and he lived

154 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

without a friend to serve, as he died without a friend to succour or to pity him! Miserable end of a miserable existence: Fearful poverty and introduction to sufferings, far more fearful!—

Good God! what is man! how terrible is it thus to pass a few years in this vale of sorrow, comfortless, despicable, abandoned—To know none of the refreshments and delights of this life, and yet to forfeit all the delights of the future! But let me forbear making any reflections, till I have shewn you the contrast of *Egemo*, in a man of the same occupation and the same rank of life, whom also I lately attended upon his death-bed—and would to heaven my latter end may be like his!

To the Author of the Reflections on Death.

S I R,

THE wise son of *Syrach* observes, that *Death is most dreadful to a man at ease in his possession.* Of the truth of this we have a remarkable proof in *Cardinal BEAUFORT*. Your account of this unhappy person, was extremely affecting and instructive: Permit me to add thereto a few particulars concerning him.

him. He was buried in the cathedral of *Winchester*, with this *LATIN* inscription over his grave; *Tribularier si nescirem misericordias tuas*, "Did I not know the greatness of thy mercy, I should be sorely troubled." History informs us, that he was accused of poisoning *HUMPHREY*, Duke of *GLOUCESTER*, but he prevailed with the king to grant him letters of pardon for all the offences he had committed, contrary to the statute of *provisors*, and the acts of *præmunire*. This pardon, says *RYMER*, is dated at *Westminster*, July 19, 1432. Five years after which, we are told, he procured another pardon under the *great seal*, for all sorts of crimes whatever, from the creation of the world to the 26th of July, 1437. He died the 11th of June 1447, having survived the abovementioned Duke *HUMPHREY*, little more than twenty eight days: He left vast sums to charitable uses, and if *HARPSFIELD* may be credited, no less than 400,000*l.* to the prisons of *London*. *BEAUFORT* is represented by some historians, as an arbitrary, supercilious, turbulent prelate, yet they seem to agree that by his death, the king lost one of his most able, and most faithful counsellors.

C H A P. XVI.

*The ports of death are sins, of life good deeds ;
 Through which the Saviour leads us to our meeds :
 How wilful blind is he then, who shou'd stray,
 And bath it in his power to make his way ?
 This world death's region is, the other life's ;
 And here it shou'd be one of our first strifes,
 So to front death, as men shou'd judge us past it :
 For good men but see death, the wicked taste it.*

ROWE.

IT is common, to hear circumstances and station in life, urged as an excuse for neglect of religion : to obviate which, we have examples proposed to us of sincere and regular piety, in every station of life *. Thus we are shewn, that religion is incompatible, with no worldly circumstances ; and of consequence, no worldly circumstances can offer a sufficient excuse for a disregard to it. The wretched EGENO could urge

* It must be understood, that I speak of the honest and allowable stations in life. There are some professions, with which, indeed religion is absolutely incompatible ; and therefore, if a man would save his soul, he must either abjure these, or never think of salvation.

his

his labour and poverty,—but how ineffectually? Look at his fellow-labourer MENTOR, and learn how weak and frivolous such an apology.

MENTOR was of the same occupation with EGENO; worked in the same shop, and earned the same wages. MENTOR too was a married man, and had children. Thus far there was a similitude: but in other respects, where can that similitude be found?—Diligent and punctual MENTOR was never absent a day from his business, unless detained by sickness or some other necessary avocation; ever found in his duty, while EGENO kept holiday, and wasted his important time in drunkenness and riot.

Fearing God, and anxious to please him, MENTOR never refrained his feet from the church, and was a regular attendant at the blessed supper of the Lord; strictly observing the sabbath, and spending it as became a Christian, a husband, a father: while EGENO's temple was the alehouse, and his devotion only oaths and impiety.

Go to the places of their abode, and mark the contrast there also: you have viewed

viewed that of EGENO — miserable scene of poverty! — At MENTOR's little dwelling, all was neat and clean, and wholesome. He had procured a small house, with a good piece of ground, which he carefully cultivated with his own hands, when he returned from his work in the evening; often rising an hour or two before the time of labour in the morning, to do the business of his garden, and to take care of his crop, which paid him well for his toil. His wife, industrious and chearful, contributed her part with gladness; her children were brought up, with every notion suitable to their station; and she omitted no opportunity to aid her husband's honest efforts by her frugality and pains. An aged mother dwelt under the same roof with them, and owed a comfortable subsistence to the pious affection of her laborious son.

It pleased God to extend the life of this useful and worthy, though mean and unnoticed man, to a happy length; for he lived to close his aged mother's eyes, and to pay the last duties of filial regard to her. He lived to see

two of his sons, capable of maintaining themselves in the world with decency and comfort; and treading—distinguished felicity of a parent!—in the steps of their father's sobriety and virtue: sons, to whose care he could with confidence leave his wife, as their religion had taught them, that a peculiar blessing ever attends those who delight to honour their parents, and “to rock the cradle of declining age.”

How pleasing how instructive to attend the death-bed of such a Christian! Oh, ye great and ye vain, ye children of voluptuousness and pomp, how doth the death-bed of such a Christian reproach your follies, and condemn your visionary views!—on that bed I saw him!—true, no consultation of physicians was held on his account; no damask decorated his apartments; no carpets his floors; vessels of silver and gold were wanting to convey the little nourishment he took:—but ah! what wretched comforters are these, when the languishing body declares the fatal moment of eternal separation from this world approaching. How much more excellent the consolation

160 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

tion arising from the testimony of an approving conscience! The more a man leaves behind him, the more reluctantly he dies; to die is an easy matter to the poor: and to a good man what matters it whether he die on a throne or a hanging-hill? The only misfortune at the hour of death, is to find oneself destitute of the supports of true Religion!

MENTOR was not destitute of these: "I am arrived, Sir, said he, at that period for which I was born, and for which I have been long preparing: and blessed be God, I do not find any terrors in the approach of death! *Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!* I am thankful to the good providence of my heavenly Father for all things;—but how shall I express my thankfulness for his exceeding love in the precious gift of his son! Oh, what a support is he to sinful creatures, like us, in this hour especially. Blessed for ever blessed be God for his inestimable gift of redemption thro' the blood of the Lamb, offered up for the sins of the whole world!" Rejoiced to see him thus triumphant over death, I congratulated

tulated his felicity, and remarked the vanity of worldly stations, when God distributes his spiritual favours thus freely to the low as well as the high, to the poor as well as the rich. “ True, Sir, said he, this is a sweet reflection to the poorer and meaner sort of us : it hath often refreshed my soul, and stopped every tendency to murmuring and complaints, which are too apt to arise in our naughty hearts, at the sight of the rich, and their plentiful enjoyments. And it was a pleasing thought often to me in the midst of my labour, that my divine and glorious Saviour stooped to a mean and toilsome employment, and condescended to work with his own hands ; setting us an example, and thus alleviating, to the true Christian, all the weariness of fatigue and daily pains. I am sure, the recollection of this has given me new life and spirits when I have been almost worn out, and ready to sink down with labour. And when I have considered all his loving kindness towards me, which he has shewed in so many instances, I have always with joy persevered in my duty, and thought myself happy
that

that I had a being to praise and adore him. And now my race is run, and I am about to appear before the judge of all the earth!"—"I doubt not," replied I, "you will appear with joy, and be forever blessed in his kingdom!"—"Thro' *Christ* I trust I shall," said he; "my only hope and reliance is on the precious Redeemer!"—"For oh Sir, what am I, what have I, but from him—and alas! what I have done is so imperfect and unworthy, that it cries for pardon only, not for reward! can it be possible that any human being can talk of merit before God!"—"Lord *Jesus*, pardon the sinfulness even of my best and most holy services, and wash them clean in thy blood!"—"But," observed I, "though you depend not upon any thing you have done, nor apprehend the least merit or deserving in any of your works, doth it not give your soul great peace and comfort, when you look back, and remember, that you have done such works, or rather, that you have used your best endeavours to obey all the laws of *Christ*?"—"Oh yes," replied he, "great, very great peace! without this I could have no peace at all:

all: for without this what test could I have of my own sincerity, or how could I dare to expect any mercy from the Redeemer? No, I bless him for enabling me, by his grace, to do something: would to God I had been more diligent, and could have done more: without holiness no man shall see him: I have laboured after it with all my might, and to the best of my knowledge I may the gracious Saviour pity my weakness, and perfect what is wanting in me!"

He addeth much more, but from this the Reader may easily collect, how happy an end a man of such just sentiments must make. He received the blessed Sacrament from my hands, and never did I administer that sacred *viaticum* to a more elevated Christian. I remember one passage in our conversation struck me. "Sir, said he, though I had never any great learning, I have always been pleased with reading; and from some book, early in my youth, I was taught to consider myself as a *pilgrim*, appointed to travel through this world to the other, where I was to remain for ever. This notion made a great impression upon

on me; and I ever afterwards used to consider myself as a *traveller*, and therefore entertained no great hopes or fears respecting any thing below; but looked continually to the end of my journey, the happiness of which, I was persuaded, depended on my right management of myself during my stay here. And this thought was the occasion not only of much content to my soul, and of much peace and resignation under every affliction and cross accident; but of my continued attention to duty, and of the exactest caution in my daily walking."

Such was MENTOR: whose life and death were equally amiable and exemplary. What a contrast to the wretched EGENO! — What man but would wish to die the death of the former? then let him take heed not to lead the life of the latter. Ye sons of men in the humbler stations of life, read the important lesson before you. Look at the examples, and revolve their ends! avoid the vices of EGENO, and copy the virtues of MENTOR, — so will you live in credit, and die in peace.

And

And let us all remember, "That every day of our life is, in the morning, a blank leaf, whereon, during the course of it, we write, and in characters indelible, all the actions of our life; let us be careful, then, that there be nothing impure, nothing base in them; that he, before whom they are to be laid, may read them with approbation. Let us live so, that we may never die! let us instantly set about it with all our might, before that tremendous sound be given, "*He expires.*"

C H A P. XVII.

Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again. Nor purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.
Titus ii. 9, 10.

Let thy soul love a good servant, --- and defraud him not of his liberty. Ecclesiast. vii. 21.

AFTER having attended the death beds of the busy and the gay, the noble and the poor, after having surveyed the issue of life spent in those pursuits,

166 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

pursuits, which are common to mankind, and contrasted every character, to make each more striking: I intended to have stopped here, and considered death in the general view,—to have offered arguments and consolations against the fear of it; and, in conclusion, to have contemplated the great things which follow after, *Judgment, Heaven, and Hell.*

But a funeral, at which I was called last night to officiate, leads me to postpone these reflections to a following chapter; that I may pay some tribute to the memory of an humble man, whose virtues deserve to be had in honour, though his low station denies him the loud applause of public celebrity.—

But why should fame be the prerogative of greatness; of worldly greatness and external splendor? To do well, and to deserve in every station, is to be great, and ought to obtain praise — and *will* obtain praise!—Yes, ye sons of obscurity, whom no titles dignify, whom no pedigrees ennoble—but whose virtuous actions are more illustrious than either—yes, ye shall inherit praise, as much superior to that which men, the world, and

and time can give, as God, as heaven, as eternity are superior to all these. This bright and blessed honour is not conferred according to rank, or birth, or title; but to high and low, rich and poor; the glorious price is held forth alike, and to him who doeth best and best deserveth, shall the best recompence be given. — Yet one sure method to obtain this blessing, in that kingdom, where all distinctions eternally cease, is to act and live agreeably to those distinctions and subordinations, which God hath wisely appointed upon earth. I mean, the sure method to obtain God's favour, is to acquiesce thankfully in that station of life, wherein he hath placed us; and with entire submission, to discharge faithfully and uniformly all the duties of it. *his love and his benediction* How to So thought the worthy man, whose decent funeral was last night solemnized: he had been servant in a neighbouring family, above twenty years; and during that time, had abundantly approved himself by the strictest fidelity. An excellent example; when the depravity of this order amongst us, is the subject of universal

sal complaint, and the severest tax upon the domestic felicity of numbers! Tho' perhaps the cause and the remedy of the evil are both to be drawn from other sources, than those, which are generally proposed: to be drawn rather from the heads of families, than from those who act in menial capacities. A prudent and conscientious master, for the most part makes prudent and regular servants: and it is from the increase of such examples, that we must expect improvement in our attendants.

1. **Petrucio**, (so call we the subject of our present chapter) was happy in this respect; happy in a master, whose own life was regular, and whose great care was to discharge tenderly every duty, which he owed to his servants. He was well recompensed by the love and fidelity of his servants in general, but of **Petrucio** in particular. This faithful domestic had right notions of God, himself, and his duty. He murmured not at the inferiority and servility of his own condition: he knew it was the will of God; as such he received it with thankfulness, and lived in it with cheerful

con-

content : considering himself as the servant of Christ, he acted always conscientiously, as desirous to please him and not man only. Reflecting, that the eye of God, if not of his master, was always upon him, he feared to neglect his duty, and thought it a poor excuse for himself, if he could escape the notice of an earthly observer, while all his actions were minutely scanned by him, who searches the secrets of the heart. Hence he served not *as a man-pleaser, but as the servant of God, in singleness of heart as unto Christ; not with eye-service, but as the servant of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart*; all his service was done with a good will, not with a morose constraint and sourness,—*as to the Lord and not to man only*,—-for he knew, and ever bore in mind the comfortable truth, *That whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free* *.

In consequence of these right principles, PETRUCIO ever esteemed his master's interest, as essentially connected with his own : and would as soon have

I

suffered

* Ephes. vi. 5. &c.

suffered the extremest punishment, as have joined in any collusion to defraud, much more to have himself defrauded his master. It was his constant endeavour to preserve the strictest oeconomy in every part of his trust, and he would express the highest wonder and deepest abhorrence at many of those infamous arts, which modern polite servants would frequently advise him to practice, and to which tradesmen, for the basest ends, would often attempt to allure him. "Though I am in a state of servitude upon earth, he would often say, I hope to be in a state of freedom with God hereafter: but how can I hope for this, if I am deficient in those *easy* duties, which are required in my station? For surely, when all the necessities of life are found me, it is *easy* to be just and faithful, honest and industrious—nay, gratitude itself alone should lead to this, for his sake, who provides so well for me; and who requires certainly that I should repay all his expence with every worthy and cheerful endeavour possible on my part."

We

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 171

We may well believe that a servant with such notions, must be uniform and excellent in his whole conduct. And such indeed was PETRUCIO. He received every order with silence and humility: he executed every order with diligence and punctuality. He pretended not to be wiser than his directors; and he was a stranger to the odious malapertness, which is one of the distinguishing qualifications of contemptible modern *valets*. His long continuance in the family had contracted in his breast a tender affection not only for his master and mistress, but also for their children and relations: and at length their interest was become so peculiarly his own, that he joyed in all their joys, and partook of all their sorrows.

The fruits of his fidelity were the confidence and esteem of his master and mistress; the affection of the family; the reverence of his fellow-servants; and a comfortable saving, on which he proposed to live, if ever he should have cause to quit the service; and which, dying in it, he had the pleasure to be-

queath to a widow sister and her children, whom it rescued from many difficulties, and placed in a happy situation, above dependance and necessity.

During the time of his last sickness, he frequently declared, that the tenderness and regard of his master and mistress to him, more than overbalanced the merit of all his former services, and were an abundant recompence to him. For **PETRUCCIO** had a generous mind, and was sensible of affectionate treatment. His master frequently every day visited his sick room, and read and prayed by his bed-side: his mistress with her own hands administered his medicines, and took care to supply him with the most proper nourishment. His humility alone could equal his gratitude and thankfulness on such occasions: and when upon his expressing his great obligations, his mistress once said, that "this, and much more than this, was due for his faithful services." "And that word, madam, said the honest fellow, with tears in his eyes, that word is a reward sufficient for more than twenty times such services as mine."

Thus

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 173

Thus died this useful worthy man : and to do all honour to him, his master buried him at his own expence, with all the decency and propriety conceivable : six neighbouring farmers, tenants to his master, bore his pall ; his master and mistress walked as chief mourners ; the rest of the family attended in procession, and had mourning given them on the occasion ; and so great was the esteem, in which this faithful servant was held, (who I should have observed, was the willing and joyful hand by which his master and mistress distributed their liberal charities) — that scarce a dry eye was seen at his funeral : and his death and funeral, I persuade myself, have done more to reform the servants in that part of the world, than twenty lectures to them could have atchieved. “ See how *Perruccio*, though a servant, is honoured and respected ” — was the general cry : and the general reason given on all hands was, “ Because he was faithful, honest, and industrious.”

And let servants, in conclusion, be told, that if they would obtain such favour here, and such recompence as *Pe-*

TRUCIO doubtless hath obtained, their only method is to go and do likewise; is to imitate his example; is to make their master's interests their own. The best motive upon which they can do this, is to consider, that in so doing they serve the Lord *Christ*, and may be assured, that, according to their fidelity, so shall they reap hereafter. For God is no respecter of persons.

I subjoin to this chapter the following excellent rules, which were sent by an unknown hand to the *Christian's Magazine**; entirely agreeing with the Gentleman who sent them, "That, if they were hung up in all kitchens and servants halls, (printed on a large sheet) they would be extremely useful."

To the Faithful, Honest, and Industrious.

A Good character is valuable to every one, but especially to servants, for it is their bread; and without it they cannot be admitted into a creditable family: and happy it is, that the best of cha-

* In *January* 1762, p. 36.

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 175

characters is in every one's power to deserve.

II. Engage yourself cautiously, but stay long in your place; for long service shews worth, as quitting a good place through passion is a folly, which is always repented of too late.

III. Never undertake any place you are not qualified for; for pretending to do what you do not understand, exposes yourself, and what is still worse, deceives them whom you serve.

IV. Preserve your fidelity; for a faithful servant is a jewel, for whom no encouragement can be too great.

V. Adhere to the truth, for falsehood is detestable; and he that tells one lie, must tell twenty more to conceal it.

VI. Be strictly honest; for it is shameful to be thought unworthy of trust.

VII. Be modest in your behaviour; it becomes your station, and is pleasing to your superiors.

VIII. Avoid pert answers; for civil language is cheap, and impertinence provoking.

IX. Be clean in your business; for

I 4 slovens

176 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

flowers and fluts are disrespectful servants.

X. Never tell the affairs of the family you belong to; for that is a sort of treachery, and often makes mischief; but keep their secrets, and have none of your own.

XI. Live friendly with your fellow-servants; for the contrary destroys the peace of the house.

XII. Above all things avoid drunkenness; for it is an inlet to vice, the ruin of your character, and the destruction of your constitution.

XIII. Prefer a peaceable life with moderate gains, to great advantages with irregularity.

XIV. Save your money, for that will be a friend to you in old age; be not expensive in dress, nor marry too soon.

XV. Be careful of your master's property; for wastefulness is a sin.

XVI. Never swear, for that is a sin without excuse, as there is no pleasure in it.

XVII. Be always ready to assist a fellow-servant; for good nature gains the love of every one.

XVIII. Ne-

XVIII. Never stay when sent on a message; for waiting long is painful to a master, and quick return shews diligence.

XIX. Rise early; for it is difficult to recover lost time.

XX. The servant that often changes his place, works only to be poor; for the rolling stone gathers no moss.

XXI. Be not fond of increasing your acquaintance; for visiting leads you out of your business, robs your master of your time, and puts you to an expence you cannot afford: and above all things, take care with whom you are acquainted, for persons are generally the better or the worse for the company they keep.

XXII. When out of place, be cautious where you lodge; for living in a disreputable house, puts you upon a footing with those that keep it, however innocent you are yourself.

XXIII. Never go out on your own business without the knowledge of the family, lest in your absence you should be wanted; for leave is light; and returning punctually at the time you promise, shews obedience, and is a proof of sobriety.

173 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

XXIV. If you are dissatisfied in your place, mention your objections modestly to your master or mistress, and give a fair warning, and don't neglect your business, nor behave ill, in order to provoke them to turn you away; for this will be a blemish in your character, which you must always have from the place you served.

C H A P. XVIII.

*Faith, builds a bridge across the gulph of death,
To break the shack, blind nature cannot shun!
And lands thought smoothly on the farther shore.
Death's terror is the mountain faith removes:
That mountain barrier between man and peace.
'Tis faith disarms destruction: and absolves
From every clamorous charge the guiltless tomb.*

YOUNG.

WHILE wrapt in the silence of the night, I take my solitary and contemplative walk in the church-yard, with what a feeling concern do I reflect on the living world around me! How striking the contrast! Here rest in quiet and peace the well-nigh forgotten

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 179

ten remains of those who once filled up busy spheres on the earth! All those distinctions which they so anxiously courted, are now for ever done away: all those animosities which they so warmly agitated, are now for ever hushed and forgotten; and all those complainings and sighs which they so mournfully uttered, are silenced for ever, and heard no more — Yet on the great theatre of the world the same parts are still acting: the same ardour for place and pre-eminence; the same propensity to malice and envy; the same repinings and lamentations are found:—as if generations preceding read no lessons of instruction; as if men utterly forgot that their hour appointed was hastily advancing.

Oh that they were wise, that they understood these things, that they would consider their latter end! Benevolent wish! for nothing so powerfully, so strongly teaches, as a consideration of that latter end—which is of general concern, for every son of ADAM is equally interested! Can we reflect upon the day of dissolution approaching, when every sublu-

180 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

nary hope shall cease, and every worldly project vanish as the shadow; can we survey the solemn mansions of the dead, where the mingling dust bespeaks the folly of all earthly pre-eminence and honour;—and yet pursue, with unremit-
ted chase, the fleeting vanities of life: and yet indulge, with unrelenting hearts, the burning passions, which torture human peace, and murder man's best felicity?—Nay, and can it be possible that we should look beyond the grave, and recollect that an existence everlasting awaits us, and not use every wise, every rational method to secure to our souls the comforts of that existence, when time hath closed upon us, and we have bid an eternal adieu to all things here below?

Thrice awful meditation! May its powerful instruction deeply impress my soul!—nothing teaches like death. 'Tis indeed the wages of sin, and a fearful evil, we must needs allow it! But then it is a persuasive monitor, and superior to all things, convinces us of, and leads us to combat and conquer sin!

The

The sting of death is sin! From thence we may plainly discover what is the grand remedy against its fear and its power to harm. Destroy sin, and death becomes no longer formidable: he cannot hurt or annoy, for his sting is taken away. But how shall we achieve this desirable enterprize, how destroy the sting of death? 'Tis done, already done for us! *Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!*

Here then, thou trembling mortal, who art every day distressing thy feeble soul with the fear of approaching death—here behold the first and greatest consolation under it: "*Faith in Jesus Christ,*" who through death destroyed him who had the power of death; and will deliver thee from that fear of death, which all thy life-time hath kept thee in bondage! Look to that triumphant conqueror, who died on the cross, and lay in the grave, to sanctify it for us: see in his precious redemption a full pardon for all thy offences; and with the eye of faith steadily fixed upon him, thou also shalt triumph over an enemy, already vanquished.

This

182 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

This is the grand remedy against, and chief consolation under the fear of death, "the knowledge and love of *Jesus Christ*:" which properly understood, comprehends every other consolation. But that we may not be misunderstood, let us, as a second *consolation* and *remedy*, recommend to the soul, desirous of victory over this fearful foe, "an earnest care to live a life of obedience through that faith in *Christ*," which indeed without such obedience will be found weak to support the firm structure of a joyful hope. Live as you would wish to have lived when your anxious head is laid upon the dying pillow: live as the Gospel of that Saviour directs, through whom alone you expect salvation; live as you are assured he will approve. The prospect of death will then animate your soul with fortitude and delight: You will wish to be dissolved and to be with *Christ*!

There again we enjoy another *consolation*, exquisite and unspeakable, under the apprehension of death! "We shall be with *Christ*!" We shall live with him, and be like him! Like in purity
and

and holiness, and like him in happiness too! Transporting thought! Can death be esteemed an evil———nay, rather must we not welcome that as our greatest good, which conveys us from a world like the present, to a kingdom where joy and rest, and peace, shall eternally surround us!—But of this we shall speak more hereafter.

Another reflection which ought to abate our fears, and reconcile us to death is “the absolute certainty, and unavoidable necessity of it.” Could our fears at all avail to prevent the stroke, or even to respite it, they might well be allowed, and we should have some plausible reason to urge in their support. But alas the stroke is inevitable. Surely then it is our wisdom to familiarize ourselves to an event which *must* come shortly, and which, to render us still more watchful, may come instantly. Claim ye then no more the character of rational, ye simple ones of the earth, who start at the thoughts of death, and use every method which ingenious thought can devise, to dissipate and drive it from you.—Lo, the moment comes, and utterly un-

184 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

unprepared, ye must stand before your God. — Conquer yourselves : and remembering that death will come when it will come, review it in all its circumstances, and learn, through *Christ*, to gain a happy victory over this dreadful leveller of all human distinctions.

And reflect, of what will death deprive you ? Not of being—which to us must certainly be of all things most dear ! No ; the soul cannot cease to be ; it only changes its circumstances and state !

“ But it separates those old and familiar friends the *body* and the *soul* ! ” — And let us bless God for the separation. For who can regret a separation from that flesh, which is the seat of sin and of diseases, and which, from both, hath so frequently afflicted us with the most piercing distress ! No ; farewell to the body (we will say with joy) since thereby we bid an eternal farewell to sickness and sin !

“ But death separates us from this *world* ! ” True ; and it introduces to one, unlike the present, where sorrows and losses, disappointments and trials, shall never more be known. — But it
sepa-

separates us from our friends!"—Afflicting separation! The tender heart must bleed, and the affectionate eye cannot fail to drop a tear! Yet look forward, and behold—see in the joyful realms to which thy spirit is soaring—*friends*, immortal and unalterable friends, awaiting thy glad arrival!—and perhaps many already, many near to thy heart, have gone before thee, and will give thee an enrapturing welcome. Nay, yet a little while, and thou shalt receive to thy rejoicing embraces those whom thou hast left weeping in the vale of sorrow!

Arm'd with these consolations, who shall fear the stroke of death? Who but must rejoice to relinquish this scene of trial and trouble, and to commit their souls into the arms of a *Redeemer*, who died to save his people from their sins: of a *Father*, whose unwearied care is over all his works, and whose watchful providence extendeth to the minutest concerns of his creatures? In that cheering truth the soul must find comfort, as under every trial and affliction, so especially when the moment of death approaches; which a child, submissive to
the

186 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

the better will of such a father, will receive with thankfulness, and consummate resignation !

As therefore *death* must come ; and after death, *judgment*, and a state of *bliss* or *misery* unalterable, let us, like the wise virgins, keep our lamps always ready trimmed and burning, that we may never be found unprepared. And that we may still be excited to a stricter watchfulness—let us contemplate those great things that are to come hereafter : let us now suppose ourselves, as summon'd to appear before the *judgment-seat* of God ; and as about to receive the eternal reward of our deeds,——*heaven* or *hell* ;——affecting thought ! Holy Father—we tremble and adore ! Blessed *Jesus*, be our advocate and intercessor !

C H A P.

C H A P. XIX.

Shall man alone, whose fate, whose final fate
 Hangs on that hour, exclude it from his thought?
 I think of nothing else: I see! I feel it!
 All nature, like an earthquake, trembling round;
 All deities, like summer's swarms, on wing!
 All basking in the full meridian blaze:
 I see the JUDGE enthron'd! the flaming guard!
 The volume open'd! open'd ev'ry heart;
 A sun-beam pointing out each secret thought!
 No patron! intercessor none! now past
 The sweet, the clement, mediatorial hour!
 For guilt no plea: to pain no pause, no bound!
 Inexorable, all! and all extreme.

NIGHT THOUGHTS, Night 9.
DID our existence end with this
 life, how little to be dreaded, yea,
 in many cases, how much to be desired
 were death! But our existence doth
 not end with this life; eternity is be-
 fore us, and it is eternity which makes
 death of so much consequence. How
 awful, how alarming is that representa-
 tion, which the sacred scriptures give us
 of the solemn day approaching, which
 is to determine our fate for this eter-
 nity! Let us contemplate the stupen-
 dous scene;—for who can dwell upon
 such

188 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

such interesting reflections without serious thoughts, and heaven-directed resolutions? The steady belief of a future judgment is sufficient to make all men zealous in duty.

The doctrine of a future judgment is peculiar to the Christian Revelation. Human reason could not discover it; for human reason could not discover how the God of all the earth would be pleased to deal with his creatures, and with that world which he hath formed for them.— But in much mercy, to animate and awaken our best desires, the eternal Lord of all hath declared, that an endless and unalterable state is reserved for us, happy or miserable, as we comply with, or refuse, the terms of his covenant:—and that upon a *day* appointed, he will pass the righteous sentence upon all; when those who have done good shall go into life everlasting, and those who have done evil into everlasting fire!

Alarming, important truth! What thinking creature can be indifferent to it! Picture the awful scene to your view: imagine yourself now called to the bar of inviolable justice! there enthroned

throned in glory unutterable, sits the sovereign *judge*, the gracious Redeemer! Thousand thousands ministring unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him! See that earth, once the seat of all your cares and fears, now wrapped in universal flame: hark, the heavens are passing away with insufferable noise; the sun is extinguished; the stars have started from their spheres, and all this system of created things is hastening into utter destruction! The trump, the awakening trump hath sounded, and all the dead, arising from their sepulchres, are summoned to appear before the impartial judge!

Oh, terrible distress! Where, where shall we fly, if conscience condemns us, and we dare not approach that impartial judge! In vain shall we call upon rocks to hide, or mountains to cover us! rocks and mountains are themselves dissolving; they can give neither shelter for our heads, nor support for our feet! In vain shall we solicit our friends to intercede; ——— our friends will be then too deeply concerned

ed themselves to regard the cause of others; and what, ah—what could patrons or friends avail, when "*the clement, the mediatorial hour*" is now absolutely passed and gone;—and we have not made him our intercessor, who would have been as mighty to save and reward, as he now is to punish and avenge! What too will dissembling profit us; or how can we expect to deceive him whose eyes are as a flame of fire, who pierceth into the heart's inmost recess! Who will lay open before us the whole volume of our lives, and place in the universal view all those thoughts, and words, and deeds of darkness, which in vain we secreted from the eyes of our fellow-creatures on earth!—for who can escape the eyes of omniscience?

Can tongue express, can heart conceive the anguish which will rend our souls, when the dire sentence of condemnation shall pass—a sentence from his lips which breathe only mercy and love to the just;—and which we despised, when calling us upon earth to *him*, with the most pathetic invitations;—*Come unto me, and I will give you rest!* Aggravating circumstance!

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH. 191

circumstance! We have abused this love! We might have been blessed, eternally blessed!—But now the fatal moment is arrived, “*Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*,”—is the dreadful malediction!

No, my soul, through this Redeemer’s never-changing love, we will hope, confidently hope, to avoid the horrors of this extreme distress! And, oh, that every soul of man would, with such composed and solemn thought, meditate upon it, that joyful songs of thankfulness only might on that day be heard: that with humble trust we might approach the Judge’s throne, and find in him,—not the Almighty avenger,—but the Father, the Saviour, the Friend!

What can equal the goodness of our God! or what could we desire more gracious at his hands, than that he should seat upon the tribunal of justice that son, that only-begotten and beloved son, who once came to our earth, not to judge, but to be judged; who died for those sinners on whom he is now willing to confer an eternity of bliss!

Happy

192 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

Happy he, who, convinced of this adorable grace, looks continually and stedfastly, with the eye of Faith, to that great day when the Saviour shall come in the clouds ! Then shall his fears be for ever removed, and all his anxious doubts shall vanish as the smoke ; then with an accent of melodious sweetness, with a look diffusing love and joy ineffable, the great Redeemer shall welcome him, together with all those who have been faithful unto death, shall welcome them and say, *Come ye blessed of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world !*—Nay, he shall vouchsafe to enumerate those general deeds of christian benevolence, which such souls have performed through their faith in him : and not only enumerate, but acknowledge them, as if they had been conferred upon himself, *Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me !*

How forcible, how affectionate a motive to us, now in the day of pilgrimage, to be diligent, continually and unweariedly diligent in all such acts and offices of love ! *Christ* will accept them, our Redeemer,

deemer, our judge, our hope, and our all, will accept our tender charities to his members, and our fellow creatures, will accept our works of faith and labours of love, as if we had been happy enough to have had an opportunity of performing them, even to his own person! And, publishing the grateful tidings to all around, he will allow us to partake of his triumph, and to enter, amidst his returning saints and angels, those regions of glory and peace, where we shall live with him, and enjoy everlasting happiness.

But we will refer to our next Chapter what we have to add respecting the peculiar blessedness of that state, and the exquisite misery reserved for those *who know not God, and who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who will be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance; and when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them who believe, in that day* *. A passage of scripture

• 2 Tim. i. 7.

K

which

194 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

which cannot fail greatly to influence those who give it that attention which its importance deserves: for who can think of *everlasting destruction*, from the *presence* of the Lord, and the *glory* of his *power*, without an anxious desire to avoid that destruction, the very terror of which chills the heart!

Prostrate, my contrite heart I rend:

My God, my Father, and my Friend!

Do not forsake me in my end!

Lord Roscommon.

CHAP. XX.

And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal. Matt. xxv. 46.

ETERNAL punishment! Eternal life! What awful words! What solemn sanctions! Who can read them and be unconcerned? Who can think of them, and be indifferent to the momentous truths they impart?—Were our existence to terminate with the present passing scene, indulgence might be laudable, and every self-gratification right. “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die: let us crown ourselves with

with rose-buds; let none of us go without his part of our voluptuousness; would then be the language of reason and truth. — But eternity before us — consummately blessed, or consummately wretched; — and death every moment shaking his dart triumphantly over us, preparing to strike once and strike no more; — can it be possible that any rational being should remain unsollicitous, and neglect to prepare for the important realities of eternity, while chasing, with unremitted ardor, the fugitive vanities of time!

Yet, alas! many beings, proud of their faculties, and boasting their superior reason — are found, are daily found, immersed in sin, and rivetted to the world; heedless of God, of themselves, and immortality; uninfluenced by every motive of gratitude, unmoved by every argument of interest to obey the voice of Religion and Truth, and to secure the eternal salvation of their souls! Oh, that they would indulge one serious reflection; that they would condescend awhile to meditate, with us, on the miserable woe reserved for those who forget their God: — on the inexpressible com-

196 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

forts which they shall reap in joy who love and serve him.

Think then, my fellow-creatures, oh! think of that awful day of which we spoke before*, and imagine, if you can, the horror which must seize the souls of those who hear the dreadful sentence, *Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire!*—Driven from the presence of God, which is itself complete and perfect joy; driven from the habitations of the blessed, where songs of gladness are heard continually: driven from the society of those best-loved friends, whose kind remonstrances they would not hear on earth, and now—ah! fatal separation—now must never, never more hear or behold! And driven thence—aggravating circumstance! even by the condemnation of that lord of love, who, desirous to bless and to save, freely shed even his own blood, and as freely would have given life, had they but asked it!

And were not this, even only this expulsion from God, from Christ, from Heaven—of itself a *hell* sufficient! Yet what horrors remain behind? They shall be driven into the lake which burn-

* In the last Chapter.

eth with fire and brimstone, whose actual and insufferable tortures shall aggravate the mind's inward horror.—Oh! who can dwell with everlasting burnings! yet where, where shall one drop of water be found to cool the parched tongues? who can dwell where devils and condemned souls shall mix their mutual and insulting taunts and upbraidings; where there shall be no society; but a society in common accusations, and where, every gentler passion expelled, the tumultuous workings of despairing minds shall miserably confuse and distract each other!

There too the passions, which were indulged and mortified on earth, shall become severe tormentors, ever craving, yet never finding gratification; ever consuming the anxious heart, themselves never consumed! There the worm of conscience never dieth; there the flame of self-condemnation and burning guilt shall never be quenched!

Where shall the soul find comfort? shall it be in the companions of its earthly crimes, condemned to the same place of woe! Alas, those companions will then be found the sharpest thorns to

198 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

goad the guilty mind ! Fierce hate will seize the place of former love, and they will curse each other in the bitterness of their souls, as the mutual causes of each others undoing ! But, little consolation being found in accusing others, their upbraidings will speedily recur upon themselves ! Then only will be heard—(ah me ! the very thought is anguish) only heard, dire gnashing of the teeth, weeping and wailing, execrations and sorrow !
 — Yet neither is this all : for though peace and rest enter not there ; though one gleam of joy shall never pierce through the darkness of their distress ; yet all this, and more, might be borne well, very well—did *hope*, fair comforter, who comes to all, did she but ever come, and cheer the wretched sufferers with the sweet alleviation, that, years on years passed by ; that ages upon ages gone ; a period will be put to this consummate misery, and the prisoners of hell be set free ! But this hope is withdrawn * !

Oh

* In Milton's *Paradise Lost*, we find the following tremendous description :

—He (Satan) views
 The dismal situation waste and wild :

A dun-

Oh eternity, eternity, how fearful is the thought! And wilt thou, oh man, for the momentary delusions of sin, plunge into this gulph of punishment unutterable, unending!

At least, my soul, let the prospect be profitable to thyself; and struck abundantly with its horrors—infinately more alarming than thou canst imagine or paint—turn thy view, and let us contemplate the more pleasing scene, the life eternal, the perfect pleasures which the dear Redeemer hath in store for those, who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for honour and immortality!

But if an inspired Apostle, who was favoured with the rapturous prospect, declares, that it hath not even entered into the heart of man to conceive the

A dungeon horrible on all sides round
As one great furnace flam'd: yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Serv'd only to discover fighs of woe,
Region of sorrow, doleful shades; where peace
And rest can never dwell; hope never comes
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge fed,
With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd!

B. I. v. 60, &c.

200 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

greatness and excellency of the good things reserved for the righteous; how shall we attempt to spell them out, dark habitants in cottages of clay! May it not suffice to know, that the happiness we expect will be on all parts complete: happiness, without the least mixture or alloy of discontent or dissatisfaction!—Pleasing truth; yet not entirely sufficient to gratify our thirsty and inquisitive souls. In condescension to our weakness, — or perhaps I might say — our strength — (for earnest desires after the knowledge of immortality doubtless bespeak the soul immortal) — however, in great goodness certainly, the Lord of our life has vouchsafed to us some glimpses of that future felicity, which may render us desirous enough to know more, which may animate every endeavour towards the possession of so exalted a good!

We feel evil so sensibly, that perhaps we can form a better idea of heaven from its negative than its positive blessings. Who amongst us is a stranger to *sickness* to *sorrow* and *pain*? Who amongst us is a stranger to the comfort which would follow an entire exemption from these evils?

evils?—Now in heaven, our bodies spiritualized, and our souls made perfect, we shall never know pain of body, or pain of mind: sorrow and crying shall never have admission into those realms of joy.

But happy as our state would be, freed from those cruel spoilers of our peace, yet if *death* and dissolution were certain, the eminence of our bliss would only render the stroke doubly dreadful. In heaven, then, to secure the perpetuity of our delight, there shall be no more *death*: this mortal shall put on immortality—and free from pain and from sorrow, we shall fear no end of the transporting scene.

Positive blessings, numberless and unutterable, shall attend these negative ones. God will not only wipe away all tears from our eyes; will not only invest us with eternal security in bliss; will not only remove every thing defiling and noxious from those regions of joy; but he himself will dwell amongst us, and be our God.—He, the adorable Father; with the Lamb of Love, and the Spirit of Holiness, shall be the object of our contemplation.—He, the blessed
and

202 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

and all-glorious Deity, whose presence is joy, and bliss, and heaven, shall be the life, the light, the praise of the new JERUSALEM, and all its divine inhabitants! Love shall reign triumphant in every heart: every pure and celestial desire shall be gratified to the full: every holy and devout affection shall find its adequate supply: and one uninterrupted scene of thankfulness, serenity, and comfort, shall smile eternally, and eternally be found; where the harps of ten thousand times ten thousand shall ceaselessly hymn the Father of mercies, and the Lamb who sitteth on the throne for ever and ever!

Come, then, Lord Jesus! come and put a speedy period to this miserable world of confusion and sin! Hasten, blessed Lord, hasten thy kingdom; whence every evil shall be wholly removed, and where all good shall be found which can perfect the bliss of men and of angels! Faint and dark, indeed, are our earth-bound conceptions of this consummate glory, and of that which thou hast purchased for thy servants——purchased at a price which may justify our most elevated hopes, even at the price of thy own loved life, and ever precious blood!

Yet

Yet through the riches of thy wonderful grace, the humble Christian, who by faith now enters into rest, hath some sweet foretaste, some pleasing anticipation of the joys to come. Love, grateful love, looking to thee, feels a transport which enraptures the soul, fills it with sweet complacence towards all its fellow creatures; and makes the afflictions of this transitory world light and easy to be borne—nay, which makes death itself no longer formidable, but devoutly to be wished, as the happy conveyance of an imprisoned spirit to its God and its hope: to its freedom and perfection: to its dear departed friends, and all the joys of blissful immortality!

Give me then, oh! give me Love, thou bountiful bestower of every good gift! so shall I experience the beginning of heaven in my heart, and die with full persuasion, that the fair bud will burst into a perfect blossom—that my joys, begun in grace, will be consummated in glory everlasting!

For thee, too, my READER, let me offer up this fervent prayer:—“OH! mayest thou feel and be made perfect in the love of Christ!” so will thy life be blessed below; so will thy death be comfortable; so wilt thou be made partaker of thy Saviour’s kingdom!—

Se-

204 REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

Serious and important have been the subjects which have employed our mutual meditations: may they be impressed no less strongly on thy heart than on my own: may they awaken thee, if careless, to a life of love: may they confirm thee in that life, if happily thou art already devoted to it! This, this be sure is the only road to peace; this, this be sure is the only wisdom of man! Earnestly wishing thee much success in thy Christian course, I bid thee farewell; and exhort thee to keep thine eye stedfast on the author and finisher of thy salvation! All beside will fail and forsake thee! But a little while, and as well the hand which hath written, as the eye which reads these lines, shall become cold and inactive, and moulder in the dust: speedily, oh! my friend, our days will be completed, and we must bid adieu to all things below! Then let us live like men conscious of this truth—let us live like those who know they must die; who know that they must live for ever.—So shall we secure our own salvation; and, however strangers to each other here, shall meet and rejoice together in that kingdom, where mutability shall be known no more.

—! INDEX.



I N D E X.

A	
A DDRESS to mortals	page 19
<i>Affection</i> , parental, its influence	34
— often abused	35
AGRICOLA, a wealthy farmer, his manner of life and sudden end	97
ALTAMONT, the noble, his last hours	124
AVARO, character of	35
B	
BEAUFORT, Cardinal, his melancholy end	142
— Anecdotes respecting him	152
BUSULO, an unregretted worldling, his death	88
Burial-service, fine prayer from	22
C	
Consolations against the fear of death	181
Countess of — her amiable character	134
Christ's merits the soul's grand dependance	32
Church, parish, the duty of attending it	75 &c
—	92
Church-yard, reflections in	3
D	
Duke of *** his elogy	138, &c.
E	
Education, parents mistakes in it	60
— Rules for it	65
EGENO, his wretched case	149
Father,	

I N D E X.

F

- Father*, heavenly, a regard to him the best security of obedience to the earthly father — 27
Family prayer, its necessity — — — — — *ibid.*
Feelings of humanity, finest, well consistent with christianity — — — — — 30
Funeral, melancholy, described — — — — — 10

G

- Grave*, imaginary address from — — — — — 8
Great, keep up distinctions in death — — — — — 122

H

- HALL*, Bishop, a story of his — — — — — 117
Happy-man, who — — — — — 132
HASHAN, a covetous old man — — — — — 115
HAUSTULUS, a young farmer — — — — — 120
Heathens, in ignorance of a future state, pitiable — — — — — 6
Heaven — — — — — 199
Hell — — — — — 196
HOUGH, Bishop, a character drawn by him — — — — — 136

I

- Infant* baptised at his father's funeral — — — — — 12
Infidelity, a most monstrous sin — — — — — 31
Instruction, early, its great importance — — — — — 58
Judgment, future, its importance — — — — — 7
 ———— described — — — — — 187, &c.

K

- Knowledge mutual*, in a future state — — — — — 85

L

- Lamedemonian*, public education — — — — — 60

M

I N D E X.

<i>Man, his insignificance shewn by death</i>	23
<i>Meeting again in a future state, a reflection of great comfort improved</i>	83
<i>MENTOR, a worthy poor Man</i>	157
<i>MISCELLA, a young gay lady, her dissipated life, and melancholy death</i>	31
<i>Monuments, reflections on a false taste in them</i>	137
N	
<i>NASH, Mr. letter to</i>	103
— his friend's deplorable death	104
— strictures on the life of	111
<i>NEGOTIO, a young tradesman, his worldly life, and afflicting death</i>	12
<i>Nobility, address to</i>	134
<i>Nobleman's vault, a visit to</i>	123
<i>Nurses, ignorant</i>	68
O	
<i>Old age</i>	115
<i>OSIANDER, a young tradesman, his truly christian life, and happy death</i>	25
P	
<i>PETRUCHIO, a good Servant, his exemplary life and death</i>	168
<i>Pilgrim, MENTOR's reflections on man in that view</i>	163
<i>Poor man, a view of his end</i>	148
— a reflection of great comfort to them	161
<i>Poverty, its advantages over wealth</i>	130
<i>Providence, the doctrine of a particular</i>	36
— the belief of it should strongly influence parents	37
	<i>Provid-</i>

I N D E X.

<i>Providing</i> for families often a covetous pre- tence, yet absolutely necessary —	35
PUBLIO , the noble, his aversion to death	129
PULCHERIA , an amiable and excellent young lady, her life and death —	62
— her parents manner of educating her	65
<i>Punishment</i> , future, described —	196
R	
<i>Reader</i> , farewell to —	203
ROCHESTER , Earl of, his penitence	146
<i>Rules</i> for educating children —	65
S	
<i>Sabbath</i> — — — —	76
SECURUS — — — —	147
<i>Servants</i> , PULCHERIA 's amiable notions with respect to — — — —	74
— a good one described —	167
— useful rules for —	174
<i>Sex</i> , female, mistakes in their education	60
SOPHRON , a wise old man, his character	117
<i>Sudden death</i> , reflections upon it —	93
U	
URANIUS , his prayer and death —	95
W	
<i>Widowhood</i> , consolations for that state —	41

F I N I S.



